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EDITOR'S LETTER

In this issue of *Gardens Illustrated* we take the temperature of England's gardens, with an eye to outstanding design and considered plantsmanship. From classic to city to coastal, what is the state of the nation from a horticultural point of view?

The garden at Prospect Cottage, Dungeness, is the former home of the late filmmaker Derek Jarman, and it has become something of a cultural icon, planted directly into the shingle and with views as far as the eye can see. A few minutes walk away, garden designer Emily Erlam has designed a garden that similarly celebrates the otherworldliness of the Romney Marsh landscape. In the crook of a house and influenced by Emily's love of colour, almost everything planted there also grows wild in some form on the beach outside. Using shapes inspired by the surrounding landmass, as seen from the top of the Dungeness lighthouse, to inform the forms for the beds and paths, the planting has a loose expansiveness. Threads of yellow and bright-green *Santolina chamaecyparissus* and *Achillea* 'Moonshine' intertwine with blue and pink *Amsonia tabernaemontana* and *Persicaria affinis* 'Darjeeling Red' to make an incredible space.

At the end of a narrow lane in Devon bordered by hedgerows thick with wildflowers and large English oak, beech and ash trees is South Wood Farm. Designed by Arne Maynard, the garden at South Wood is in four parts that wrap around the hub of a 14th-century house; a yard, driveway and meadows, a front courtyard, a plum orchard with a serpentine path and a kitchen garden. Not only does the garden sit comfortably within the landscape but the landscape is very much part of the garden.

Following a trial at Parham House & Gardens, where he is head gardener, Tom Brown urges us to reconsider the genus *Gladiolus* in this month's Plant Profile. After a huge amount of hybridising work gladiolus feel once again aligned with modern tastes. Forget brash and gaudy; as with tulips, the darker, subtler and more compact types have pushed their way to the fore. Tom describes 12 of the best to grow and how to use them in the garden.

I hope you enjoy the issue,

Lucy Bellamy

LUCY BELLAMY, EDITOR

DIANNA JAZWINSKI

Discover a more sophisticated side to gladioli with choices such as this *Gladiolus* 'Flevo Cool', page 62.

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JASON INGRAM

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South Wood Farm in Devon is a contemporary take on an English flower garden, page 34.

COVER IMAGE

Garden in Dungeness by Rachel Warne

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*Limited to first 20 readers only, excluding previous attendees

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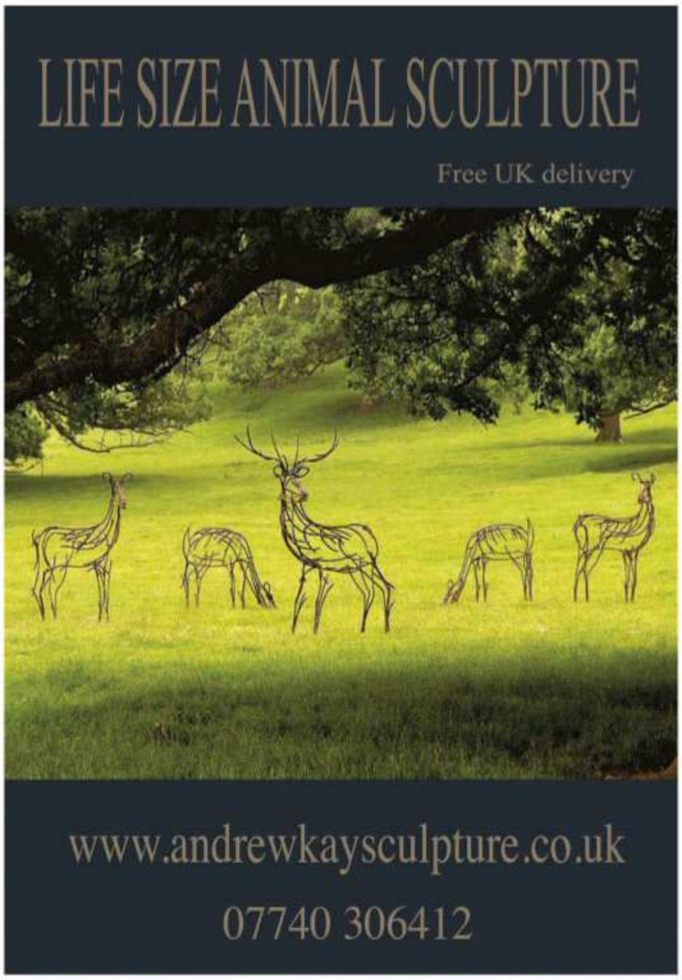
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TOM PETHERICK
Tom visits a clifftop garden in Cornwall, page 70. *"I loved visiting Duncan Scott who has created a beautiful garden with a very special feeling on the wild north coast of Cornwall."*

ULA MARIA
RHS Young Designer of the Year Ula begins a new design series, page 94. *"It can be easy to over-design a garden and I wanted to showcase the power of simplicity in this first feature."*

TOM BROWN
Head gardener Tom profiles 12 of the best new gladioli, page 62. *"Gladioli are tremendous fun to use for unadulterated colour and drama – great for both cutting and mixed plantings."*

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JAMES BASSON
James lives in the South of France where he runs Scape Design with his wife Helen, specialising in low-maintenance and dry gardens. He is a fervent advocate for creating sustainable landscapes. The winner of four Chelsea Gold medals, he was awarded Best in Show in 2017.

FERGUS GARRETT
Fergus was appointed head gardener at Great Dixter by Christopher Lloyd in 1993. He is passionate about passing on his knowledge through student and volunteer programmes at Dixter and through worldwide lectures. He was awarded an RHS Associate of Honour in 2008.

ANNA PAVORD
Anna's books include her bestseller *The Tulip* and most recently *Landskipping*. For 30 years she was *The Independent*'s gardening correspondent. In 2000 the RHS awarded her the Veitch Memorial Medal. She lives and gardens in Dorset.

DAN PEARSON
Dan is one of the UK's best-known garden designers, familiar to many through his gardening columns in the *Observer* magazine. Eight of his gardens, including the Tokachi Millennium Forest in Japan, have won awards and he was awarded Best in Show at Chelsea in 2015.

SARAH PRICE
Sarah is one of the UK's most sought-after garden designers who won worldwide recognition for her designs for the 2012 London Olympic Park. She won Gold at Chelsea in 2012 and 2018, and was GMG Garden Columnist of the year in 2016 for her design series in *Gardens Illustrated*.

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30-31 AUGUST 2018

BETH CHATTO SYMPOSIUM

A two-day symposium at the University of Essex will bring together some of the most influential horticultural thinkers to discuss Ecological Planting in the 21st Century – and to celebrate the life of plantswoman Beth Chatto, who died earlier this year

Taking Beth Chatto's own approach to planting as a starting point, this international gathering of speakers will talk about how, through their own work, they are trying to re-imagine their approach to both the design and practice of ecological gardening, and further advance and expand gardeners' plant palettes.

Beth Chatto and her husband Andrew began their garden in Elmstead Market, Essex, in 1960. Combining Andrew's research of natural plant communities and Beth's passion for gardening, they transformed land declared unfit for agriculture into an oasis of green and gravel. Over several decades, Beth developed and refined her ecologically inspired combinations of dry, damp and shade-loving plants both in the garden and for sale in her nursery. Her many books over the years have focused on specific growing areas, often considered challenging, but as Beth has shown, it is more about the correct plant combinations and a consideration of right plant, right place.

This unique event will be held at the University of Essex in Colchester on 30-31 August 2018 and is open to everyone with an interest in planting and sustainability. All proceeds from the Symposium will go to support the work of the Beth Chatto Education Trust – key to ensuring Beth Chatto's legacy in educating a new generation of gardeners.

SYMPOSIUM SPEAKERS

Marina Christopher (UK) – expert plantswoman. Her nursery Phoenix Perennial Plants has an emphasis on plants for a balanced ecosystem.

Olivier Filippi (France) – runs a nursery in the south of France specialising in dry-climate plants.

Åsa Gregers-Warg (Sweden) – head gardener at Beth Chatto Gardens.

James Hitchmough (UK) – head of department and professor of Horticultural Ecology at the University of Sheffield.

Peter Janke (Germany) – garden designer and nurseryman successfully combining the natural with elements of formality.

Taylor Johnston (USA) – American gardener working together with Ed Bowen at design studio and nano nursery, issima.

Peter Korn (Sweden) – plantsman, gardener and designer, with a focus on well-researched, naturalistic plantings.

Dan Pearson (UK) – award-winning landscape and garden designer, one of the earliest contemporary practitioners of naturalistic perennial planting in the UK.

Andi Pettis (USA) – director of horticulture at the High Line, New York.

Cassian Schmidt (Germany) – director of Hermannshof Garden, one of Germany's foremost botanical gardens trialling naturalistic planting.

Midori Shintani (Japan) – head gardener at Tokachi Millennium Forest in Hokkaido.

Keith Wiley (UK) – creator of Wildside Nursery & Garden in Devon and proponent of 'new naturalism'.

PROGRAMME

Date 30-31 August 2018.

Time 9am-5pm.

Location Ivor Crewe Lecture Hall,
University of Essex, Colchester,
Essex CO4 3SQ.

Tickets £275 (students £150).

Price includes full admission to both days of the Symposium, including lunch, morning and afternoon refreshments, and an invitation to the private Garden Party at the Beth Chatto Gardens for Symposium speakers and attendees on 30 August, 6-9pm.

For further information and booking details go to **bethchattosymposium.com**

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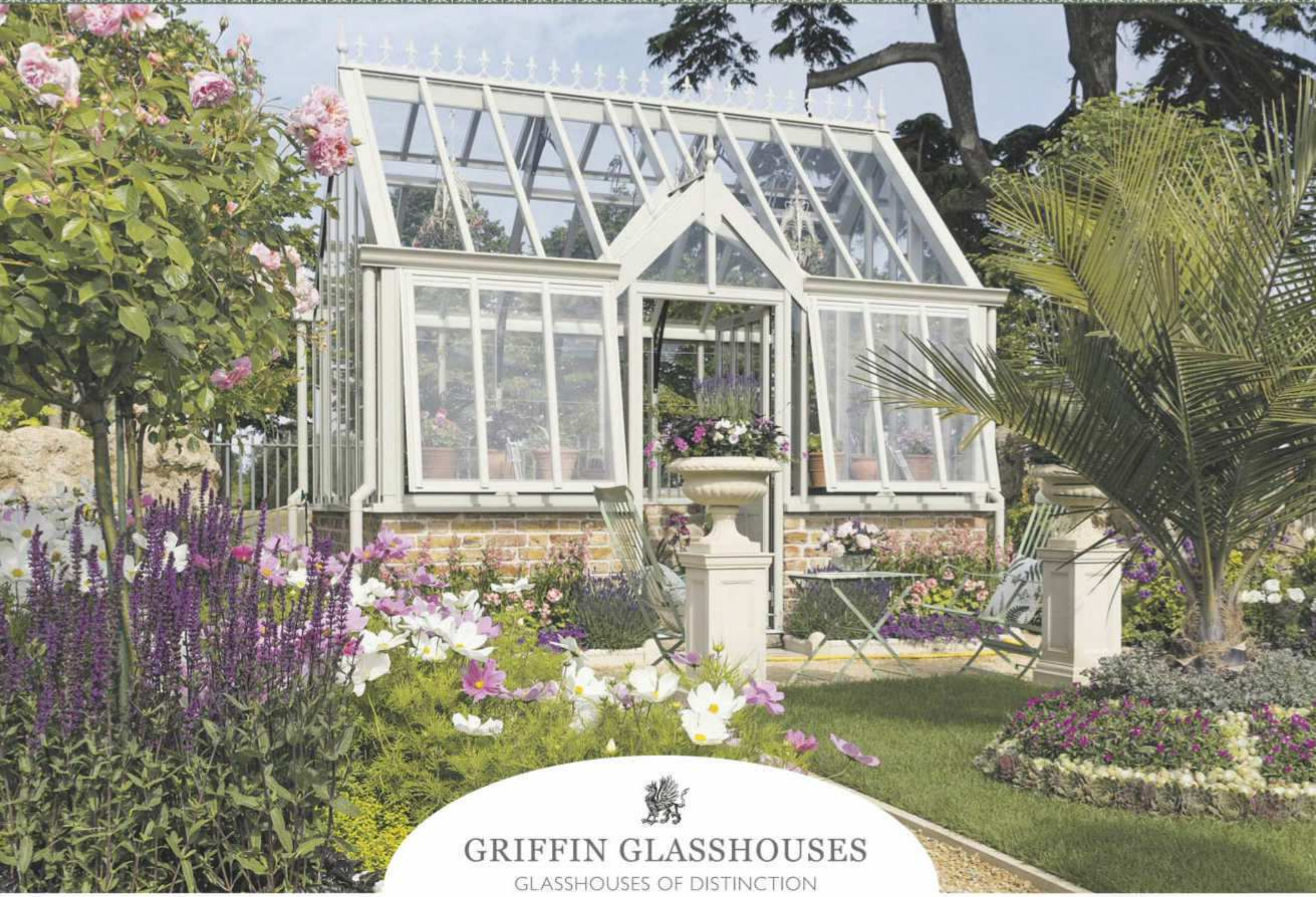

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DIG IN

What's happening, where to go, what's in flower and what to buy this month

ABIGAIL REX / GAP PHOTOS

GARDEN WEEKEND

There is an impressive line-up of speakers for this month's 25th anniversary Garden Weekend at Parham House & Gardens in West Sussex. Among those speaking are designer Tom Stuart-Smith, plantswoman Derry Watkins, historian and designer Todd Longstaffe-Gowan and head gardener Benjamin Pope. Ambra Edwards, author of the recent book *Head Gardeners*, will host what promises to be a fascinating discussion between four head gardeners: Fergus Garret from Great Dixter, Troy Scott Smith from Sissinghurst, Sarah Wain from West Dean and Parham's Tom Brown. The weekend will also offer the opportunity to buy quality plants from specialist nurseries. 7-8 July, 10.30am-5pm. Tickets cost £11 per day. **parhaminsussex.co.uk**

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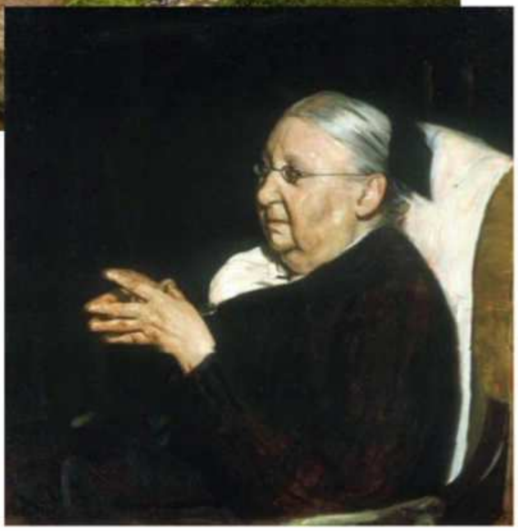
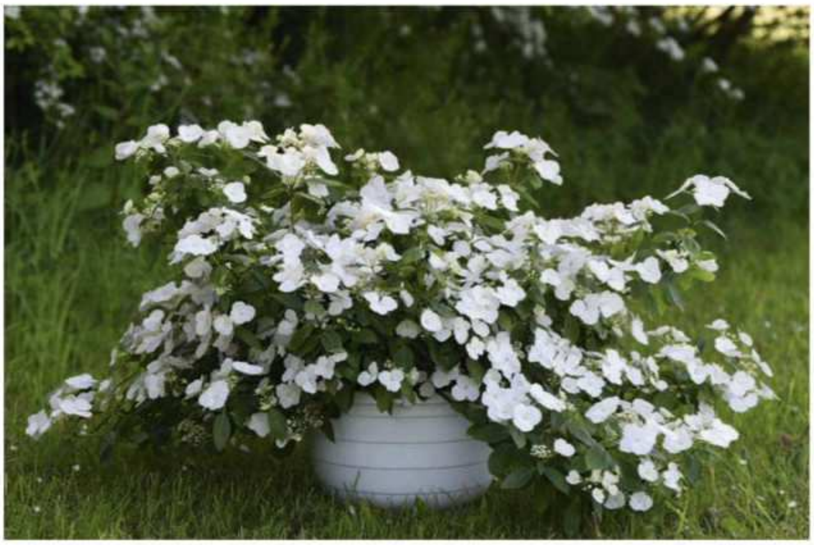


A WOMAN'S WORK

Gertrude Jekyll (1843-1932) was one of the most influential horticulturists and garden designers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Over her long career she created more than 400 gardens, not just in the UK, but also in Europe and the USA, many of them in collaboration with the architect Sir Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944). One of those gardens, Hestercombe in Somerset (above), is hosting a new exhibition to celebrate Jekyll's life and work. *Gertrude Jekyll: An Artist's Eye* will bring together original work and memorabilia, including Jekyll's own paintings, from Hestercombe's archives with additional work on loan from the Garden Museum. The exhibition marks the reinstatement of Jekyll's planting – thanks to the discovery of the original garden plans found in a potting shed in 1973 – in Hestercombe's newly restored Edwardian Garden. 21 July – 2 September. **hestercombe.com**

RUNAWAY SUCCESS

One of the most eye-catching plants on display in the Great Pavillion at this year's Chelsea Flower Show was *Hydrangea* Runaway Bride Snow White (= 'Ushyd0405'), which was named RHS Chelsea Flower Show Plant of the Year for 2018. With trailing stems and a profusion of delicate, lacecap flowers, this compact, hardy plant is perfect for hanging baskets and patio containers but would look equally stunning in a raised border. Bred by Ushio Sakazaki from Japan, it is a hybrid hydrangea that can produce around six times as many flowers as a standard hydrangea. The white flowers, which are tinged with pink, appear from spring and are produced right through to mid-autumn. Reaching a height of around 1.2m, it's available now from Thompson & Morgan, with prices starting at £14.49 for a 10.5cm potted plant. **thompson-morgan.com**



CHRIS LACEY PHOTOGRAPHY

NATURAL CHOICE

Tom Raffield has added three planters to its range of stylish accessories. The Green Range includes the Morvah Ceiling Hanging Planter (above), £195, which features a hand-glazed, earthenware, planter bowl cradled by a steam-bent oak frame; the Morvah Wall Hanging Planter, £275, and the Merryn Floor planter, from £695, which has a series of hand-shaped, twisted blades of oak supporting a ceramic planting bowl. **tomraffield.com**

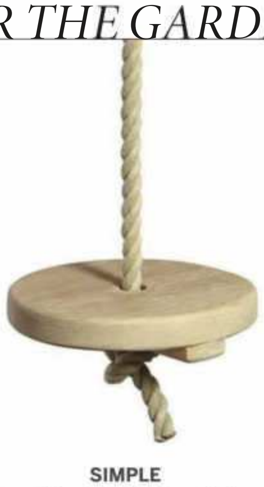
SEAL OF APPROVAL

The UK charity Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) has launched an international accreditation scheme for Botanic Gardens. It hopes that the raised international profile of the gardens will make it easier for them to access much-needed funding for conservation work. Open to both BGCI members and non-members, the accreditation scheme recognises horticultural excellence and has so far been awarded to seven gardens, including the National Botanic Garden of Wales (pictured). **bgci.org**

ART FORM

Renowned Dutch plantsman and designer Piet Oudolf has been awarded the Singer Prize, a biennial award given to an artist whose work is seen as contributing to the development of contemporary Dutch visual art. 'We regard Piet Oudolf as an artist, as a painter who uses the earth as a canvas and colours his compositions with flowering perennials, shrubs and trees,' said art historian, and board member of the Foundation Friends of Singer Laren, Harriet Stoop-de Meester. Visitors to the Singer Laren museum this summer can enjoy the Sculpture Garden designed by Piet, along with a retrospective of his work and an international art exhibition, *Painted Gardens*. Singer Laren, Oude Drift 1, Laren, the Netherlands. **singerlaren.nl**

3 FOR THE GARDEN... GARDEN SWINGS



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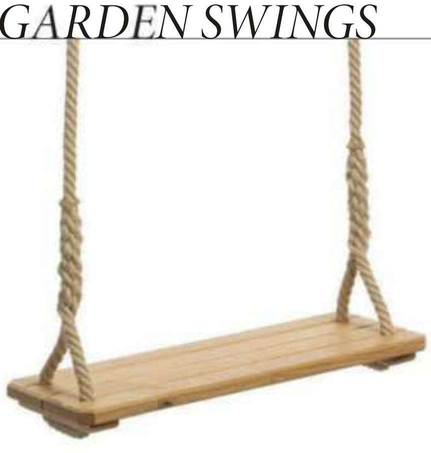

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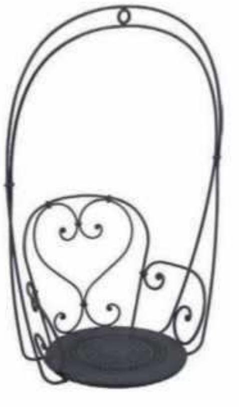

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DIARY

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① **Great Stag Hunt**
The magnificent stag beetle is under threat and is already extinct in many parts of the UK. Wildlife charity People's Trust for Endangered Species is asking the public to take part in its Great Stag Hunt and record sightings of stag beetles on six summer evenings. To find out how to take part, visit ptes.org/gsh

② **Celebrating Art in the Garden**
Discover 23 new sculptures from contemporary artists, including Sara Ingleby McKenzie whose *Up Town Girl* is shown right. The exhibition is held in a Wiltshire garden – newly designed by del Buono Gazerwitz – that features a spiral maze and wildflower meadow. 22 June – 8 July, 11am-6pm. £5. Urchfront Manor, Wiltshire SN10 4RF. friendsofthegarden.org.uk

③ **Historic Gardens Weekend**
Six period gardens belonging to The Weald and Downland Living Museum will demonstrate some of the plants grown by rural households from the Tudor period to the Victorian era. Visitors can enjoy guided walks, and the museum's collections and herbarium will be on display. 30 June – 1 July, 10.30am-6pm. Tel 01243 811348, wealddown.co.uk

④ **Wildflower Walk**
Discover some of Scotland's native wildflowers on this tour of Benmore Botanic Garden with conservationist Phil Lusby. Phil will also point out some of the commoner mosses, which are so abundant in the garden. 5 July, 2pm, Benmore Botanic Garden, Dunoon, Argyll PA23 8QU. Tel 01369 706261, rbge.org.uk

⑤ **Garden Museum Literary Festival**
The Garden Museum's fifth literary festival dedicated to writing inspired by gardens takes place this month to celebrate the museum's re-opening. This year's programme of speakers includes Lia Leendertz, Allan Jenkins and Tom Stuart-Smith. 7-8 July, 10.30am-5.30pm. £110 for a weekend ticket, £60 for a day ticket. Garden Museum, 5 Lambeth Palace Road, London SE1 7LB. Tel 020 7401 8865, gardenmuseum.org.uk

⑥ **Belvoir Flower & Garden Festival**
The inaugural Belvoir Flower & Garden Festival will feature ten show gardens and a discussion panel, including designers Andrew Fisher Tomlin and Nick Hamilton, that will take questions from the audience. 14-15 July, 9am-5pm. Tickets £15. Belvoir Castle, Grantham, Leicestershire NG32 IPE. Tel 01476 871 001, belvoircastle.com

⑦ **Open Garden**
The restored medieval garden at Melgund Castle, built in 1542 for Cardinal Beaton, opens for the first time this month as part of Scotland's Garden Scheme. It features raised beds and an exedra containing unusual culinary and medicinal herbs. 15 July, 2-5pm. £4. Melgund Castle, Melgund, Aberlemno, Brechin DD9 6TD. Tel 01312 263714, scotlandsgardens.org

⑧ **Hanham Court Tour and Floral Workshop**
Enjoy a tour of the private gardens of Hanham Court, designed by Isabel and Julian Bannerman, and learn how to make a summer bouquet in a floral workshop. Ticket price includes a home-cooked lunch. 18 July, 10am-3pm. £95. Hanham Court, Ferry Road, Hanham Abbots, Bristol BS15 3NT. 07974 306488, thecraftygardeners.co.uk

⑨ **Exploring Designs**
Join a workshop to explore different planting design styles, which includes a walk around RHS Hyde Hall to give you some ideas about creating your own scaled-down versions at home. 25 July, 11am-1pm. £29. RHS Garden Hyde Hall, Creephedge Lane, Rettenden Common, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 8ET. Tel 020 3178 5830, rhs.org.uk

⑩ **Midsummer Perennials**
On this guided tour, tutor Richard Wilson will show you a wide range of perennials for border planting so you can maintain a glorious colour palette all through the summer. 27 July, 11am-12.30pm. £25. RHS Garden Rosemoor, Great Torrington, Rosemoor, Torrington, Devon EX38 8PH. Tel 020 3176 5830, rhs.org.uk

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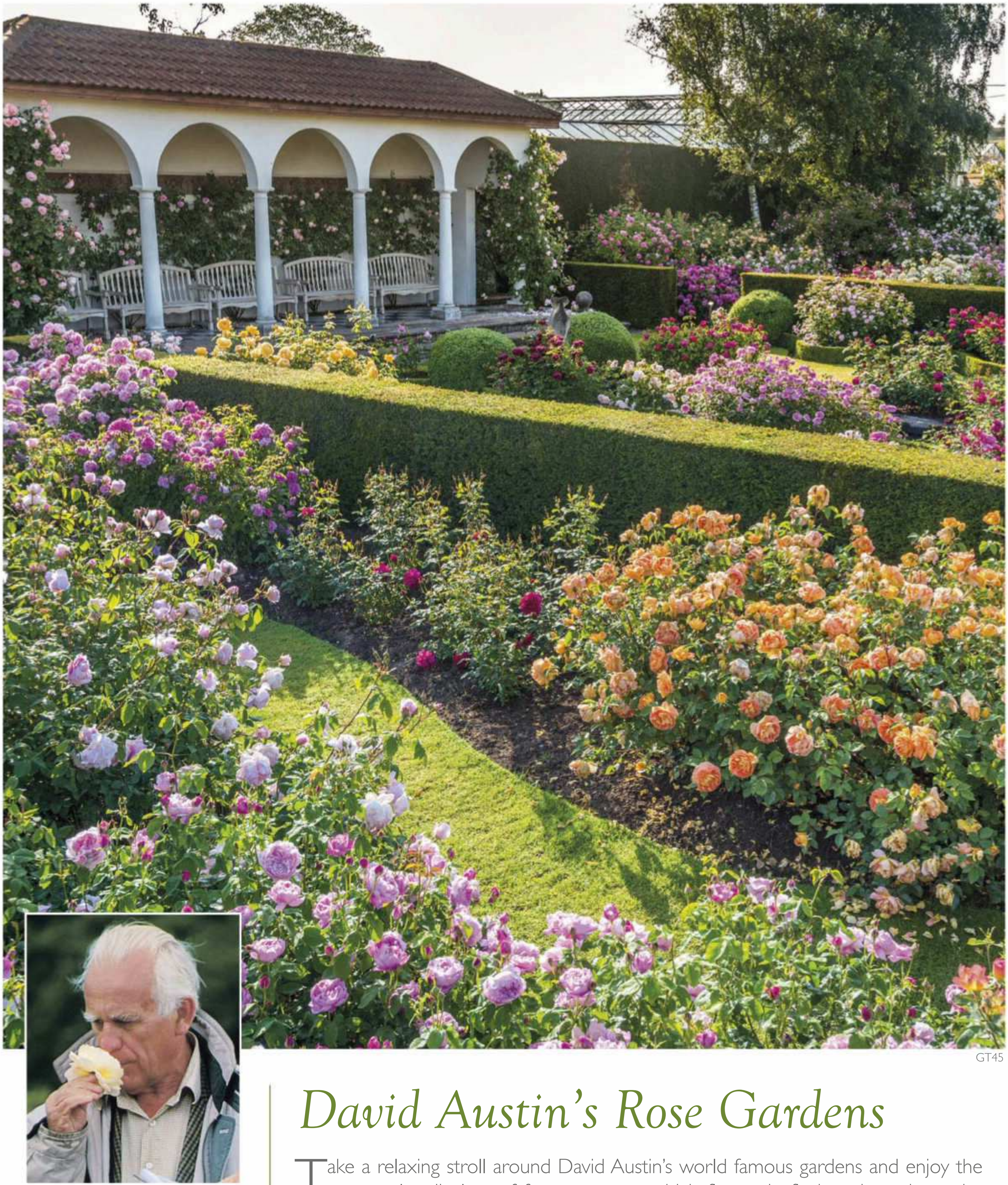

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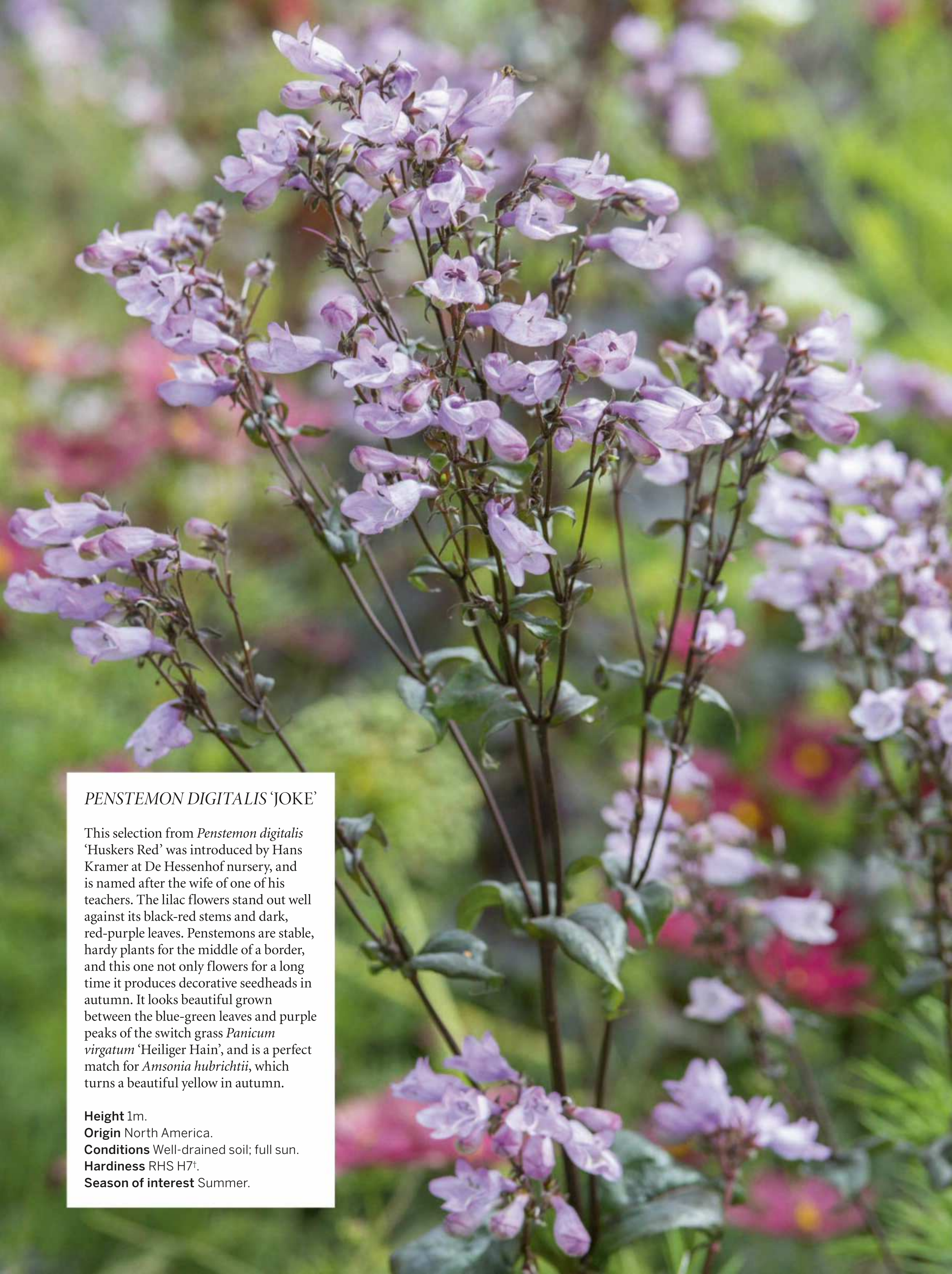


PENSTEMON DIGITALIS 'JOKE'

This selection from *Penstemon digitalis* 'Huskers Red' was introduced by Hans Kramer at De Hessenhof nursery, and is named after the wife of one of his teachers. The lilac flowers stand out well against its black-red stems and dark, red-purple leaves. Penstemons are stable, hardy plants for the middle of a border, and this one not only flowers for a long time it produces decorative seedheads in autumn. It looks beautiful grown between the blue-green leaves and purple peaks of the switch grass *Panicum virgatum* 'Heiliger Hain', and is a perfect match for *Amsonia hubrichtii*, which turns a beautiful yellow in autumn.

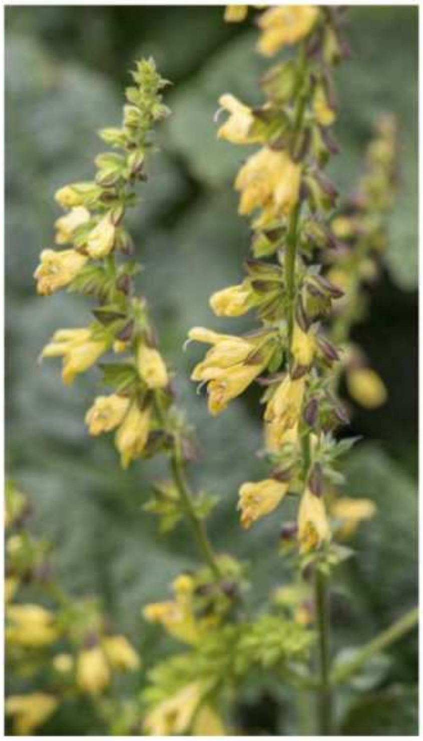
Height 1m.
Origin North America.
Conditions Well-drained soil; full sun.
Hardiness RHS H7[†].
Season of interest Summer.

JULY PLANTS

With summer in full swing, Fleur is spoilt for choice when it comes to colourful blooms and luscious foliage, and shares one of her own new selections

WORDS FLEUR VAN ZONNEVELD PHOTOGRAPHS MAAYKE DE RIDDER

Fleur van Zonneveld runs the Dutch nursery De Kleine Plantage. **dekleineplantage.nl**



SALVIA OMEIANA 'CRÛG THUNDERCLOUD'

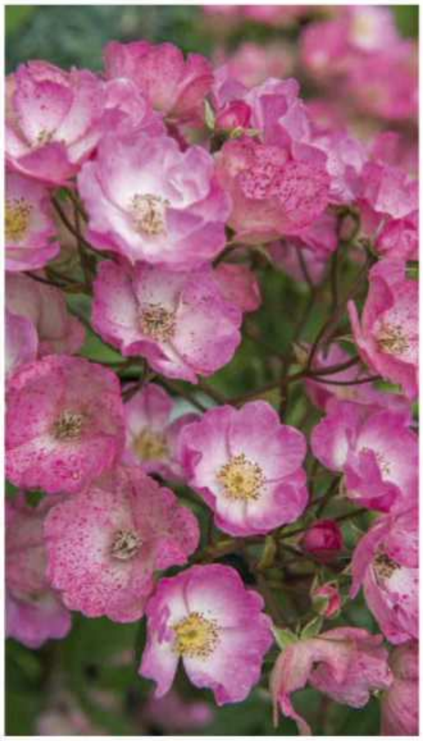
The combination of the large, yellow salvia flowers and deep-purple leaves is stunning – although only the back of the leaf has the deep-purple colour and you sometimes have to pull the plant apart to see the combination fully. Collected by Dan Hinkley on Mount Emei in the Sichuan Province of China, it becomes a large solid plant and preferably grows in fertile soil in the shade. You can sow the seed (it needs cold to germinate) but it might not always come back with the beautiful purple leaf colour. Far better to take cuttings or divide the clump.

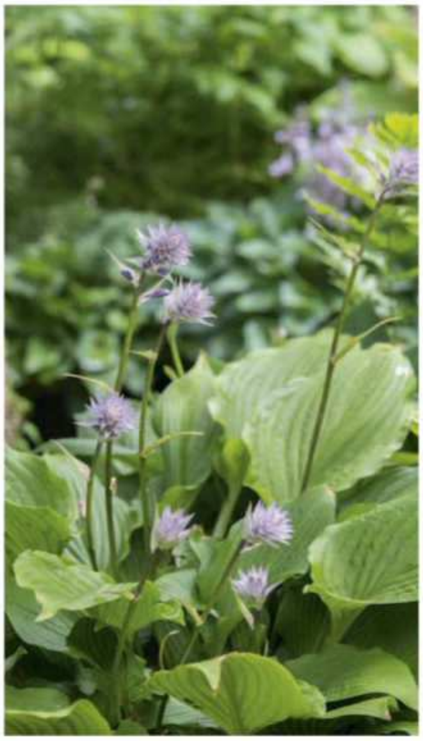
Height 70cm.
Origin China.
Conditions Fertile, well-drained soil; part shade.
Hardiness RHS H7.
Season of interest Summer to autumn.

ROSA ALDEN BIESEN (= 'LENGRATI')

This musk rose, selected by the Louis Lens rose nursery in Belgium, has elegant, light, hanging branches with large pyramidal clusters of single, pink flowers that turn from old rose to greenish pink. As the flowers grow older – or the weather gets colder – the petals are blushed with fiery, pink-red freckles, which makes it doubly exciting. The petals fall off very slowly, staying in place even in bad weather. Although it flourishes extremely easily don't cut out too many clusters, because the oval red hips add additional interest in autumn. Can be used as a shrub or climbing rose.

Height 2m.
Origin Europe.
Conditions Fertile, well-drained soil; full sun to part shade.
Hardiness RHS H7.
Season of interest Summer to autumn.





HOSTA 'HIRAO MAJESTY'

Beneath each flower are large, soft-pink bracts that look like stars piled up on dark stems and are so spectacular they can surprise even the most seasoned hosta lover. The lavender-coloured flowers appear midsummer and stand out against a background of beautiful large, bright-green leaves with wavy edges. It is a tetraploid hosta, meaning it has four sets of chromosomes rather than the typical two. Tetraploid hostas tend to have firmer leaves with clearer markings that are more resistant to damage from slugs and can withstand the sun much better than normal diploids.

Height 70cm.
Origin Japan.
Conditions Well-drained soil; part shade.
Hardiness RHS H7.
Season of interest Spring to summer.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.

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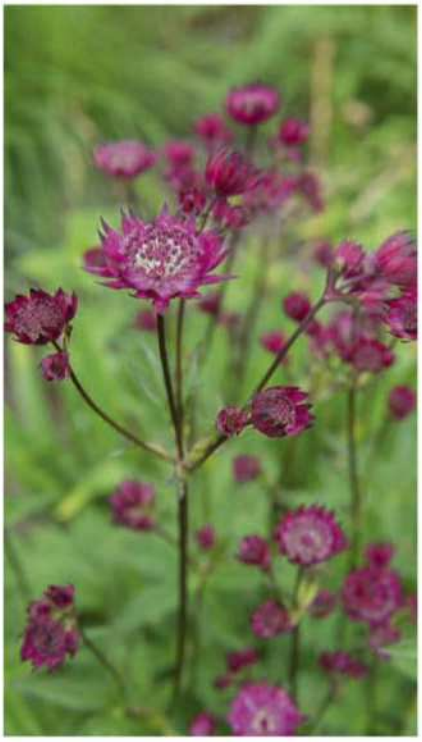


ASTRANTIA MAJOR 'HADSPEN BEST'

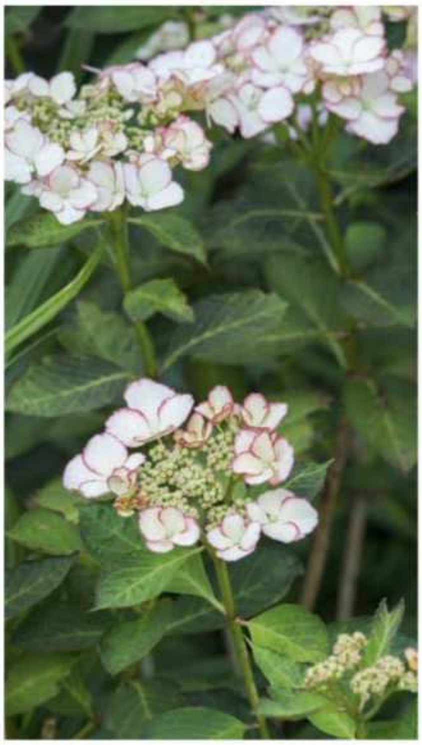
In the 1990s we visited the legendary Hadspen nursery of Sandra and Nori Pope in Somerset and brought back a beautiful *Astrantia* 'Hadspen Blood', which was very happy in our clay soil and produced many seedlings over the years. This one is by far the best with large, black-red flowers and purple-black solid stems. I did worry that perhaps the last thing the world needed was another red astrantia, but this one is so lovely and flourishes for such a long time I couldn't really keep it, or its sister 'Hadspen Beauty', for myself.

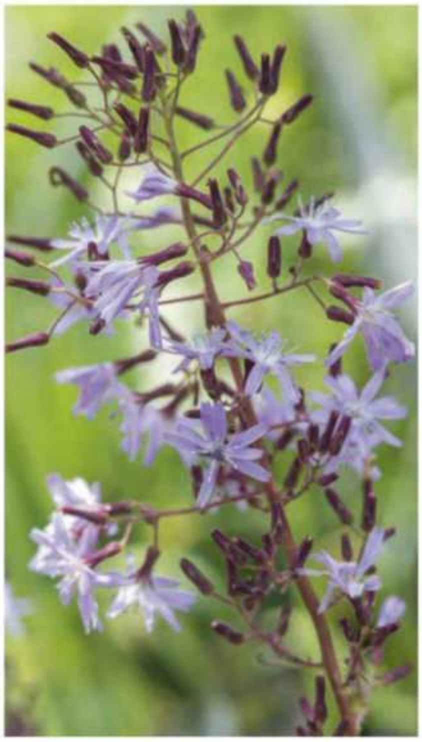
Height 70cm.
Origin Garden origin.
Conditions Moist, but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade.
Hardiness RHS H7.
Season of interest Summer.

HYDRANGEA MACROPHYLLA 'LOVE YOU KISS'

There are several hydrangeas with a thin red rim and disk-shaped inflorescences but this is possibly the best. The rim gets its redness from an anthocyanin called myrtillin, which usually makes the flowers of hydrangeas pink in alkaline soils and blue in acid soils, but in this case the red remains fixed and becomes more intense when there is more light or when it is colder. Over time the rim becomes less visible and eventually the flowers turn a beautiful green mixed with red. Both the young foliage and the autumn leaves are red coloured. AGM*.

Height 1.5m.
Origin Japan.
Conditions Moist but well-drained soil; part shade.
Hardiness RHS H5.
Season of interest Spring to autumn.





CICERBITA BOURGAEI

Although this Pontic blue sow thistle is originally from Turkey, it is well suited for the tall herb communities we call *hochstaudenflur* in the Netherlands. A close relative of lettuce, it is a lovely plant that produces panicles of numerous stellate flowers from June to July. These flowers look similar to chicory but their colour is a little more lilac. It's a thick-stemmed bristly perennial that has an almost wild appearance and works extremely well in natural planting schemes. Despite its Turkish origins it's also very hardy and in our garden has survived to -29°C.

Height 1m.
Origin Asia, Turkey.
Conditions Moist soil; full sun, part shade.
Hardiness RHS H7.
Season of interest Summer to autumn.

PLACES TO VISIT

Recommended places to see seasonal plants at their best both in Europe and the UK

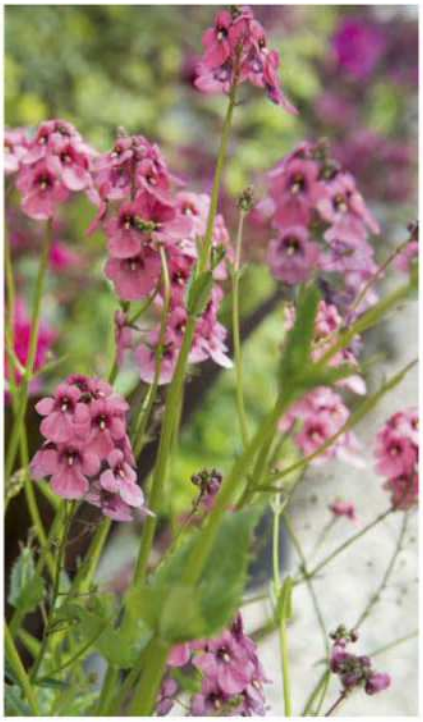
De Carishof is a lovely garden in Limburg, the southernmost province of the Netherlands. First built in 1640, the farmhouse at its centre has undergone many changes over the years, the most significant being the addition of a traditional, Limburg double Dutch gable in 1777. The garden itself is divided into several parts by hedges and both its layout and planting are quite formal close to the house gradually becoming more naturalistic as you move closer to the garden's edges. The flower borders, which are mainly concentrated around the house, are almost completely planted with perennials in a subtle colour palette of mostly white, pink and blue. Towards the boundaries you will also find fruit trees and bushes as well as grape vines. Retersbekerweg 1, 6343 PK Klimmen, the Netherlands. Tel +31 (0)45 405 5690, decarishof.nl

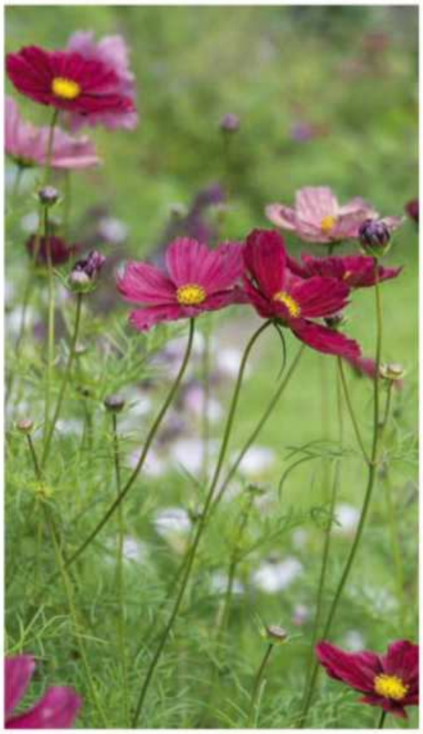
For lovers of the plants associated with new perennial schemes there is possibly no better garden to visit than **Hermannshof** in the German town of Weinheim. Under the directorship of Cassian Schmidt, this public park has become a renowned research garden looking at new directions in planting design, especially in naturalistic planting style. The combinations Cassian has created are inspired by the way plants associate in nature, and his team also carries out research into the use and maintenance of hardy perennials in the wine-growing climate. It's also a glorious park and a ▷

DIASCIA PERSONATA

This upright, eye-catching diascia is a bit of a misfit in the diascia family. Although it is covered for months with typical diascia flowers, they are of an untypical dusty mauve-pink colour that takes some by surprise. It was discovered in South Africa in 1988 by Jamie Compton, Martyn Rix and John d'Arcy and introduced to European gardeners by Hopleys in Hertfordshire. Fortunately, it is quite hardy in our Dutch climate and it is just as easy to make cuttings from this plant as it is from the more common diascias. It also makes an excellent cut flower.

Height 70cm.
Origin South Africa.
Conditions Well-drained soil; full sun.
Hardiness RHS H4.
Season of interest Summer to autumn.





COSMOS BIPINNATUS 'RUBENZA'

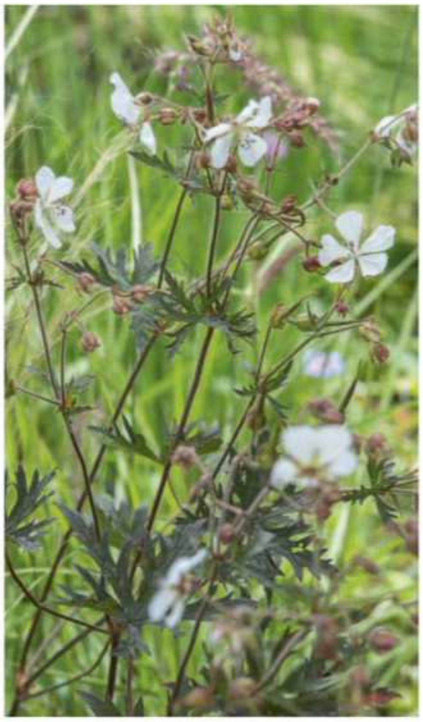
This beautiful cosmos was bred by van Hemert & Co, our regular seed supplier. Its dark, ruby-red colours dull to an old rose red over the flowering period and that shifting colour palette makes a mass planting of this cosmos extra lively. Its loose, natural structure also makes it very easy to combine with taller perennials, such as the moon carrot, *Seseli libanotis*, especially when used with a large clump of the blood-red grass *Imperata cylindrica* 'Rubra' in the foreground. AGM.

Height 90cm.
Origin Garden origin.
Conditions Moist but well-drained soil; full sun.
Hardiness RHS H3.
Season of interest Summer to autumn.

GERANIUM PRATENSE 'MOONLIGHT'

It is always a wonderful surprise when a seedling accidentally gets the chance to develop into an exciting flowering plant. This geranium has dark-brown leaves and almost completely white flowers with darker veins. The flowers grow to a height of 60cm above the leaves. As with many other plants with reddish leaves, the colour becomes more intense when the plant gets a lot of light or is placed in slightly drier soil. However, you have to be careful, as the red leaves can also burn with too much sunlight.

Height 80cm.
Origin Europe.
Conditions Well-drained; full sun, part shade.
Hardiness RHS H7.
Season of interest Summer.



▷ pleasure to explore, with around 2,500 different perennials on display and numerous old trees, including some that are quite rare in Germany. Open daily. Babostraße 5, Weinheim, Baden-Württemberg, Germany. Tel +49 (0)6201 13652 sichtungsgarten-hermannshof.de

In a quiet part of Normandy, just outside Bayeux, is the wonderful **Les Jardins de Castillon**. First opened in 1985, the garden was created by Anglophiles Colette and Hubert Sainte-Beuve, and has a very English feel particularly in the long, overflowing double herbaceous border, known as L'Allée des Fleurs. The two-and-a-half acre garden has been divided up into ten separate areas, and each has its own unique feel. The garden as a whole is a delight to visit, especially in high summer. Open until 12 October, 2-5pm, Tuesday to Saturday (and Sundays in June and July, 2.30-5.30pm), €7. Les Jardins de Castillon-Plantbessin, 14490 Castillon, France. Tel +33 (0)2 31 92 56 03, jardins castillonplantbessin.com

Colette and Hubert say they have been influenced by many well-known English gardens and I suspect one of those gardens may well have been the wonderful Arts and Crafts garden at **Rodmarton Manor**. Laid out by Claud and Margaret Biddulph, between 1909 and 1929, the eight-acre Cotswold garden is among the loveliest in England. There is so much to enjoy in this many faceted garden from its quirky topiary and abundant roses to its glorious herbaceaous borders that in summer burst into life, overflowing with a rich mix of planting that is constantly changing but always worth exploring. Open until the end of September, 2-5pm, £5. Rodmarton Manor, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 6PF. Tel 01285 841442, rodmarton-manor.co.uk

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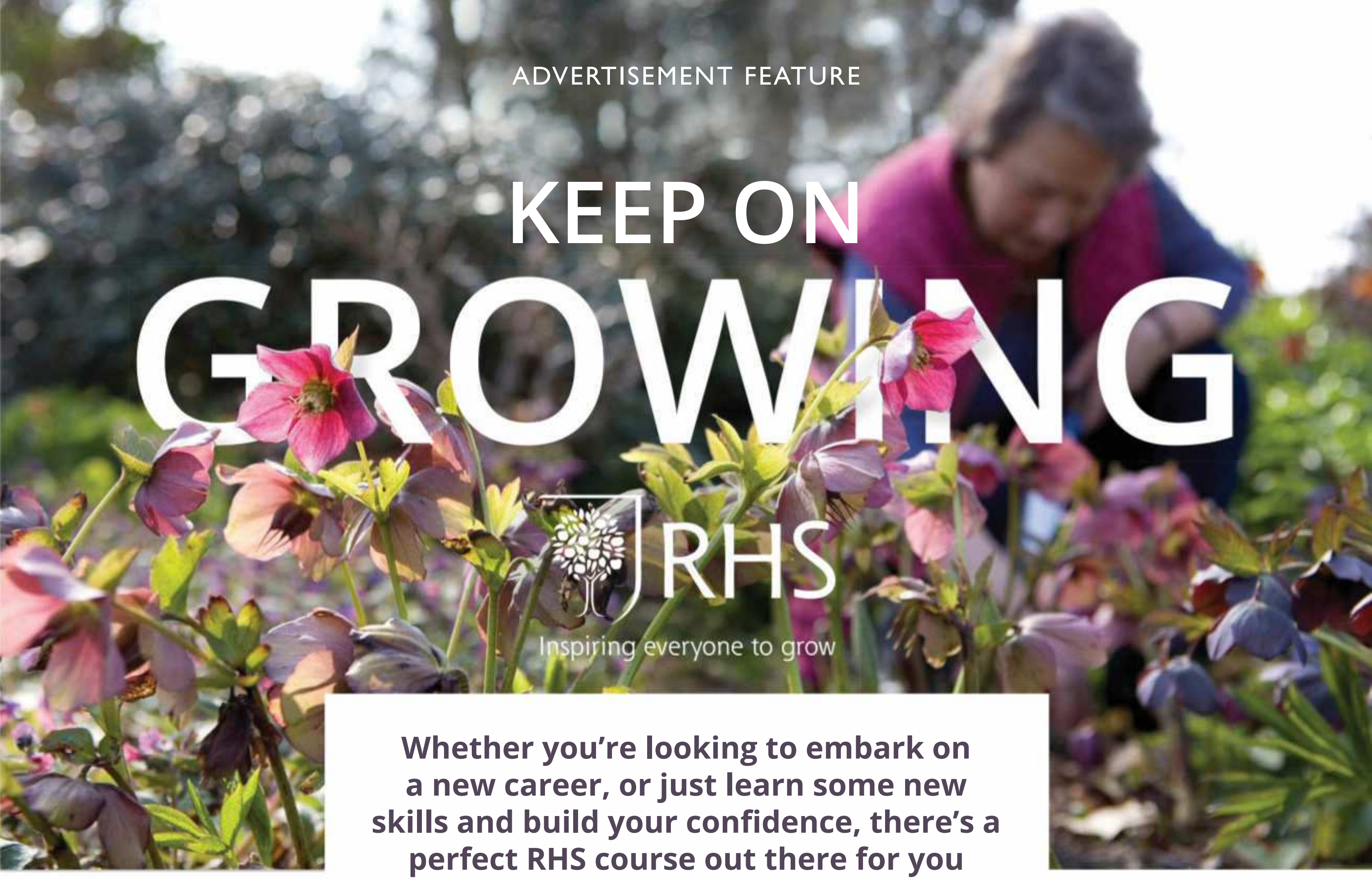

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The Outsider

This month, horticulturist Hannah Gardner heads to a plantsman's paradise in Turkey's Kaçkar Mountains where she finds a wealth of familiar garden flora – some of it good enough to eat

WORDS **HANNAH GARDNER** ILLUSTRATION **ALICE PATTULLO**

I had never experienced the joy of rolling a honey-drenched rosebud around in my mouth until I breakfasted in Barhal, a mountain village in the Kaçkar region of northeastern Turkey. The rosebud honey was served with butter, thick slabs of rough bread and a glass of local black tea. Turkey is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of flora – this in turn sustaining the bees and attracting beautiful butterflies. Beekeeping provides a good livelihood, and the competition for the best honey is intense. Most people here are of Georgian and Armenian descent, their lofty medieval stone churches and ruined forts demark the steep forested countryside. The Pontic Alps border the Black Sea and extend into Georgia. Kaçkar National Park lies at its heart, but you can cross through it without noticing for the whole range is pristine wilderness with no signage, just an extraordinary tapestry of flowers and Caucasus mixed forests on the slopes. The land is literally awash with oxygen and nutrient rich water gushing down the mountains, filling rivers and gurgling up through springs.

Inspiration

It was a revered horticulturist friend, Fergus Garrett, who first fired me with the enthusiasm to travel across the dusty plains of central Turkey and up into the verdant lands that border Georgia. Even on the Turkish scale of hospitality I was unprepared for the warm welcome that awaited. The flora is outstanding and the fertility and energy of the landscapes breathtaking.

When to go

To head over the high passes the season is July-August. Below 2,500m it is flowery from June until the hay meadows are scythed in early August. My starting point was the south side of the range as the weather is more clement avoiding the heavy mists that roll off the Black Sea. It is still unpredictable however, and terrifying thunder and lightening storms are common.

Where to go

Trails of varying difficulty cut across the mountains. I carried a tent and spent a few unforgettable nights amid the nomadic cattle and snowy high peaks.

Heading northeast from Barhal, towards the Altiparmak range with pace, quickened by the interminable sound of rushing water I passed the first of many seasonally occupied stone-and-timber buildings, the animals housed below, the timber living quarters above. The size of the plants emerging from the forest edges are intriguing with many great examples of tall herb flora. The big, deep indigo bells of *Campanula latifolia* and *Cephalaria gigantea* colonised banks between rocky streams and forest, a beautiful contrast to magenta *Lythrum salicaria* and bright *Inula orientalis*. In the shadows of ancient conifers and oriental beech colonies of musky, leather-scented *Digitalis ferruginea* and the ghostly *Aconitum lycoctonum* subsp. *vulparia* loom.

On higher, drier, open land *Centaurea pulcherrima* and *Scabiosa caucasica* share the sun with *Aster amellus* and wide drifts of the papery orange Armenian poppy (*Papaver lateritium*). *Eryngium giganteum* at its best wild in the shimmering grass.

The high meadows lie between the tree line and the alpine turf and scree. They are lush and a technicolour mass of familiar garden plants. *Astrantia maxima* subsp. *haradjianii*, *Persicaria bistorta* subsp. *carnea*, which has a particularly vivid and compact flower head, the dark-eyed *Geranium psilostemon*, and *Betonica macrantha* tumble together on the flanks of the great snowy peaks of Kaçkar Daglari.

Plant to grow at home

Among the giants of high-mountain flora *Cephalaria gigantea* has to be the most demure. This leafy, hardy perennial manages to be pale, interesting and handsome. It occurs between 1,200-3,000m, its distribution spreading through central northern Turkey and the Caucasus. The name originates from the Greek *kephale* (head) referring to the dense arrangement of many small flowers on the floral receptacle creating a generous 4-6cm rounded head. A substantial clump of large anise-scented, dark-green leaves send up branched flower stems that routinely reach 2.5m tall. The scabious-like flowers are an arresting pale primrose yellow, an unusual hue in hardy perennials. In cultivation it tolerates full sunlight and part shade but requires moisture to flourish. In situ it competes well in rough grass. In the high but sheltered valleys of the Kaçkar range it colonises stream sides, woodland clearings and lush meadows growing alongside the pale lilac panicles of *Campanula lactiflora*. It requires space, but is self-supporting, and worth cutting back after the first flush of flowers in July. Ensure it has enough moisture, and it will throw up more flowers in September, the soft yellow a wonderful accent amid the earthy tones of autumn. ☐

Guides and maps

The Kaçkar: Trekking in Turkey's Black Sea Mountains by Kate Clow, and Chris Gardner (Upcountry, 2012). A comprehensive guide to mostly unsigned walks with a map.
Mountain Flowers and Trees of Caucasia by Shamil Shetekauri and Martin Jacoby (Martin Jacoby, 2009).
You can also find useful information at **trekkinginturkey.com**

Where to stay

Barhal Pansiyon Artvin – Altıparmak Köyü, Turkey. Tel +49 (0)89 8189 81619, barhalpansiyon.com is in Barhal village and offers 15 new wooden bungalows, all ensuite, with delicious home cooking.

Karahan Pension Altıparmak (Barhal) Köyü, Yusufeli – Artvin, Turkey. Tel +90 (0) 466 8262071, karahanpension.com is out of the village closer to the trails. Ensuite rooms and a covered terrace where you eat incredible food overlooking the 10th-century church and river. The friendly owner Mehmet is happy to assist with local accommodation in the mountain villages, mule hire and local guides. There are few facilities in the mountains, so just look for a flat area to pitch a tent and be sure to leave nothing behind.

RICHARD OGDEN

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GARDENING TALENT

Ben Preston

From small beginnings big ideas grow: Ben remembers planting a conker as a child and watching the tree emerge – he's now head gardener at charity Perennial's garden York Gate in Leeds

PORTRAIT ANDREW MONTGOMERY

Earliest gardening memory Planting a conker next to the Wendy house where my sister and I kept our first chickens. It never really did that well but I always loved seeing how much it had grown.

Who has inspired your career? Mark Jackson – my best mate's dad, old footy coach and head gardener at Newby Hall all rolled into one. Absolute inspiration. If ever I've got a problem to solve he's always on the other end of the phone.

Horticultural heroes Three mighty head gardeners: Alan North [Audley End], Mark Jackson [Newby Hall] and Fergus Garrett [Great Dixter]. They have all inspired me to become a head gardener and have been very influential in my career and gardening philosophy.

Three worthwhile tips Remember why you love to garden; healthy soil mean healthy plants; trust your instincts and find out what works best for you – the books are not always right.

Favourite planting style Successional planting, which for me is high-maintenance, ever-changing gardening wizardry. Multiple layers of bulbs, shrubs and perennials, both hardy and tender, interlaced with annuals – horticultural fun.

Dream plant destination Japan, Madeira, Turkey, South Africa… the list goes one. So many weird and wonderful climates and plants out there. I think we often have an idea of how we think plants should be grown in an ornamental setting but seeing them in the natural environment really improves us as gardeners.

What principles have guided your attitude to gardening? It's easy to get caught up in the world of horticulture, following trends and fashions, loving and hating plant groups and of course gardeners are their own biggest critics. Relax. I garden because I love it and it's an absolute pleasure. Sit back in your favourite spot in the garden on an evening and look at a few of your favourite plants, it puts things back into perspective pretty quickly.

What's the next big project you'll be tackling? We are opening up the gates to the meadows at the back of York Gate. This will extend the intense one-acre of Arts and Crafts garden to the natural landscape beyond. Exciting times ahead.

Contact bpreston@perennial.org.uk
York Gate Garden, Back Church Lane, Leeds, West Yorkshire
LS16 8DW. perennial.org.uk. Open season 1 April – 30 September.

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SHAPING NATURE

South Wood Farm is a contemporary English flower garden in Devon that exudes an unforgettable sense of place

WORDS **MATTHEW REESE** PHOTOGRAPHS **JASON INGRAM**

IN BRIEF

Name South Wood Farm.
What An English flower garden designed by Arne Maynard.
Where Devon.
Size Five acres.
Soil Clay with chert rock.
Climate Warm and temperate, with high rainfall.
Hardiness zone USDA 8.

On a south-facing slope, and backed by a shelter belt of ash and oak, South Wood farmhouse makes a wonderful focal point for the garden. Here in the Front Courtyard, the sculptural topiary is a strong contrast with the mixed border plantings.

MEADOWS FLOW SMOOTHLY THROUGH THE ESTATE FENCING, SOFTENING THE DIVIDE BETWEEN FARMLAND AND GARDEN

At the end of a narrow lane, bordered by overgrown hedgerows that are thick with wildflowers and studded with large English oaks, beech and ash trees, is the ancient homestead of South Wood Farm. Composed of a wonderful collection of chert stone buildings that sit snugly within a pocket of picturesque Devon countryside, South Wood Farm is surrounded by lush, rolling pasture speckled with trees and woodland. The main house, a medieval, cross-passage, yeoman's house (with front and back doors opposite each other and connected via a corridor), dates from the 14th century, with later additions, most notably in 1655 when the house was extended.

South Wood Farm is the country home of Professor Clive Potter, who moved here in 2005. There was little garden here when he arrived so, in 2008, he invited designer Arne Maynard to help lay the foundations for the garden. Clive refurbished the somewhat dilapidated outbuildings and walls that were once part of a dairy farm, while Arne restored the yard from modern concrete to small, chert stone cobbles – the same stone used for the buildings. Chert (a type of flint) is the local stone, and indeed, is often unearthed in the borders; its use in the yard binds the farmhouse and outbuildings to the garden seamlessly. Arne Maynard's skilful incorporation of the old buildings and walls into his design creates a wonderful atmosphere and makes the garden feel much more mature than it is. The garden can be split into four main areas that wrap around the farmhouse: the Driveway, including the yard and meadows; the Front Courtyard, the jewel in the crown of South Wood; the Plum Orchard with its serpentine path; and a productive Kitchen Garden.

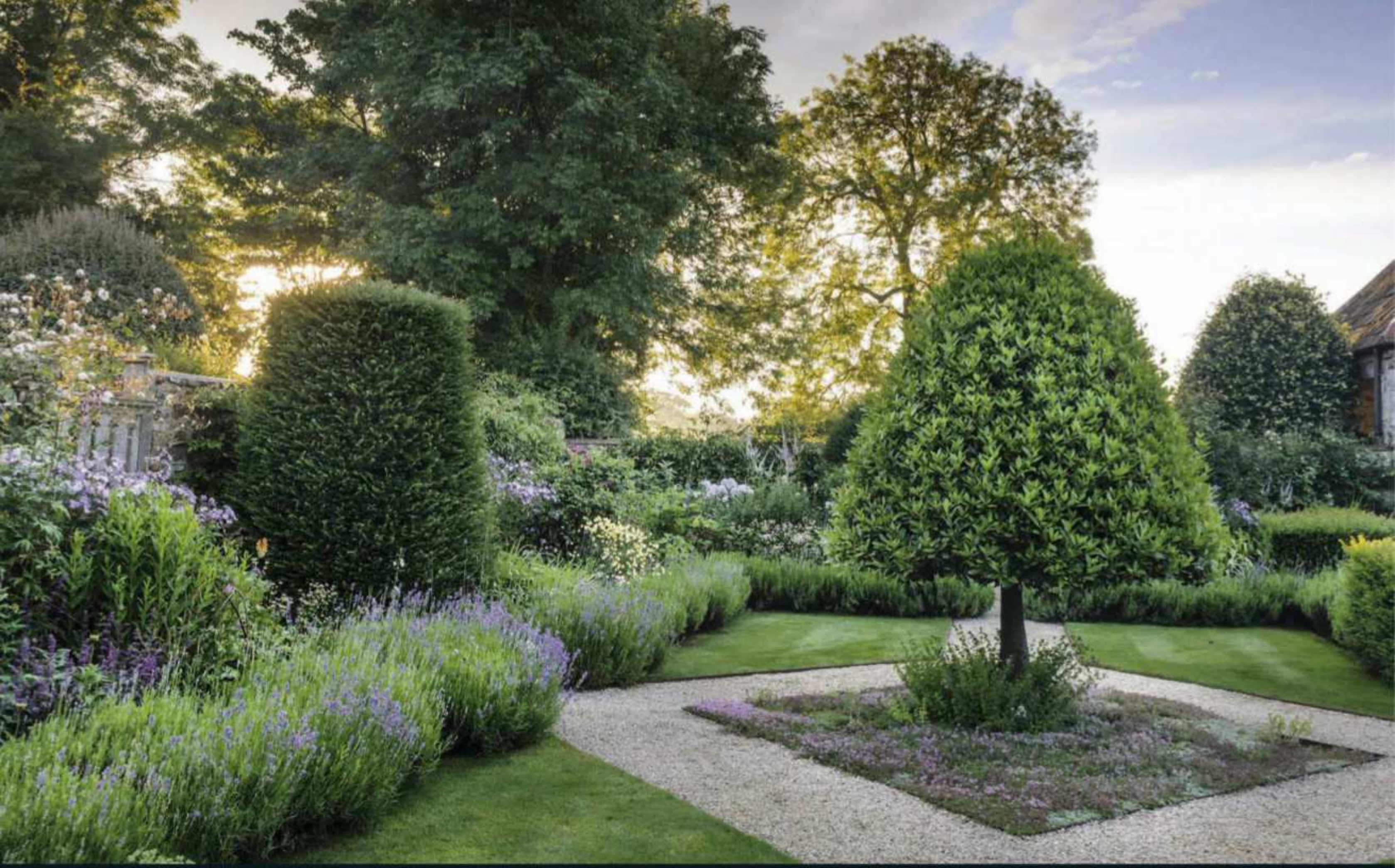
One of the most attractive features of the garden is the easy way it sits within the wider landscape. Meadows flow smoothly through the estate fencing, softening the divide between the farmland pasture and garden, and gradually build in intensity as they get closer to the main hub of the garden surrounding the house. Head gardener Will Smithson has been managing the garden with Clive for the past five years. He explains the 'borrowed view' concept by saying "not only does the garden sit comfortably in the landscape, but the landscape is very much part of the garden". Heading towards the Front Courtyard, he stops to point out link plants used to tie the garden to the meadows. *Gladiolus communis* subsp. *byzantinus* and *Athriscus sylvestris* 'Ravenswing' (a type of cow parsley), along with others such as *Astrantia*, *Knautia*, *Deschampsia* and *Molinia*, are used in the borders to echo the meadow flora. Topiary in the garden provides year-round structure and contrasts with the meadows. Will explains that they are beginning to sculpt the hedgerows to create a bond with the topiary and forge a bridge between the more formal aspects of the garden and the wider landscape.

The Front Courtyard is the most intensively managed space in the garden. It sits beneath the beautiful thatched farmhouse, which, as Clive describes it, "glows in the sunshine" and is the perfect foil for the dark yew topiary here. Arne has used a limited palette of roses to give the impression of a frugal farmer who was once given a rose cutting and has gradually increased stock to plant throughout the garden. The colour palette is also limited. "We mainly use pinks, purples and whites, and we repeat combinations through the borders," says Will. The garden begins in spring with tulips, and continues with alliums and annuals, through to perennials and roses in midsummer. Climbing roses are planted against the outer walls, with *Rosa* 'Climbing Cécile Brünner' expertly trained along the south-facing wall, and one of Clive's favourites, *R.* 'Cooperi' (Cooper's Burmese), on the house. "I love its simplicity," he says, although Will adds that "it's a thug to prune".

To the north, a sunken, serpentine path draws you up from the Front Courtyard through a meadow to the Plum Orchard. Here nine plum trees (three each of three varieties) are laid out across a square. Each is underplanted with beech clipped into a plinth-like square. Beyond these are two elegant oak benches (commissioned from Arne) that look back towards the house and are planted on either side ▷

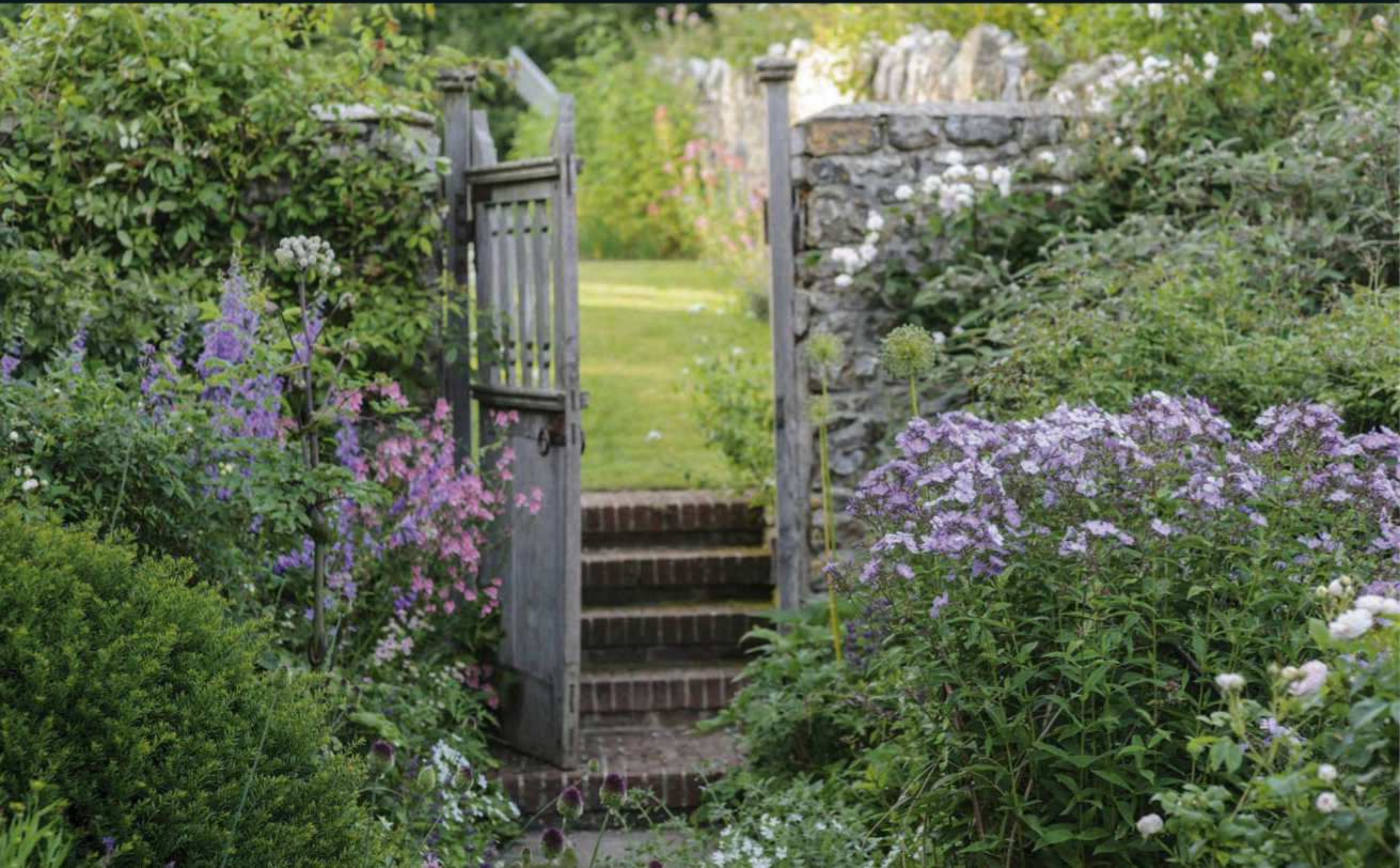
Above View from the Front Courtyard along the York path into the cross-passage corridor that connects the oldest 14th-century part of the house to the later extension carried out in 1655. The espalier crab apples connect the house with the outbuildings, and enclose the courtyard.

Below The planting in the Front Courtyard is a mixed affair, with small swathes of perennials, and roses trained on hazel hoops repeated through the borders. The limited pallete its a take on the frugal yeoman who might have built his garden with cuttings gleaned from friends and by repeating his favourites.



Above The clipped bay, planted by the previous owners in 1998, was retained and reshaped into a cone and now forms a focal point in the Front Courtyard garden. Four paths divide the garden into sections. The lavender that edges the beds has since been replaced with brick edging.

Below Brick steps lead to the Kitchen Garden. The pretty oak gate set into one of the original chert walls is a good example of Arne's attention to detail. The use of oak creates a direct link between the house and the garden, making the house sit more comfortably with the garden and vice versa.



Above Head gardener Will Smithson pays particular attention to the roses, all of which are fastidiously trained. In the borders he attaches them to a skeleton of hazel. It is important to stake them carefully, as the area is subject to high winds.

Below At the base of the south-facing chert wall, *Stipa gigantea* and *Verbena bonariensis* combine with self-sowers *Linaria purpurea* 'Canon Went' and *Verbascum blattaria* f. *albiflorum* in airy displays. The hornbeam topiary is a nice full-stop at the end of the border, the curved top echoing the large oaks.

Above Understanding the importance of proportions and balance when designing a garden is crucial so that garden and house sit comfortably together. Here, looking across the Kitchen Garden, there is complete harmony between the two.

Below Espalier fruit, meadows, a chert cobble path and wooden pillars give way to the more formal plantings. This buffer zone eases the transition from the informal meadows to the more formal Front Courtyard garden. Will uses flowering garden plants that have a meadow feel to help soften the change.

View of the Plum Orchard, looking towards the serpentine path and meadow. Each plum tree is planted with a beech plinth. The orchard makes a nice shady contrast to the lighter more open spaces in the garden. Trained fruit trees are one of Arne's trademarks, as they are a flexible way to form permanent structure, particularly in a vegetable garden. They can be used to create entrances, divisions of allées, or to punctuate spaces, and they take up very little ground space. Here the tracery of their branches form a transparent screen in front of the buildings behind.

INCORPORATING OLD WALLS INTO THE DESIGN MAKES THE GARDEN FEEL MORE MATURE

▷ with *Rosa spinosissima* (burnet rose) and *Geranium macrorrhizum* 'White Ness'. Next to the orchard is the Kitchen Garden, which, judging by the plant labels Will has dug up, has always been used as such. Arne used lawn paths to divide the space into four squares, each subdivided into smaller plots with step-over pears and raised beds framed with oak boards. Produce and cut flowers are grown for the house; sweet peas, a favourite of Clive's, are always included. Will favours the organic, no-dig method, citing a reduction in weeds as one of the main benefits. The Kitchen Garden is also home to a sunken glasshouse used to propagate and grow plants for the garden at large.

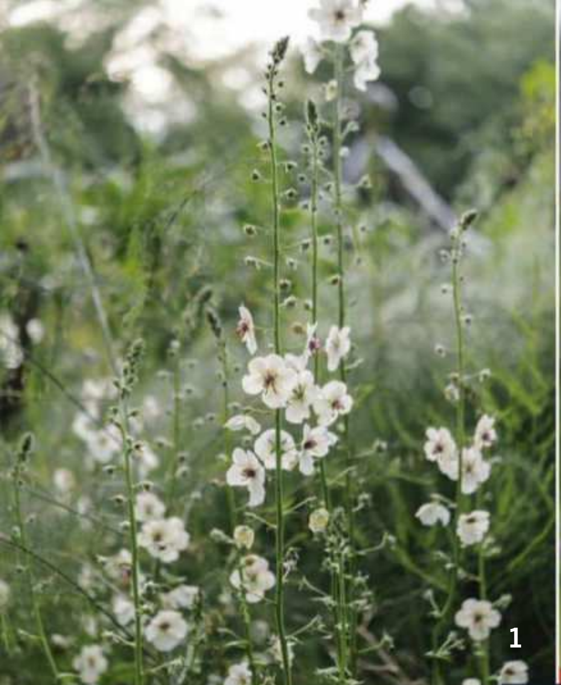
The garden continues to grow since Arne laid it out. There is a new parterre behind the house, a nuttery, and, beneath a copse, a circular pond that is in the throes of being planted. Clive and Will have taken a quality design, a beautiful house and a stunning English landscape, and created a superb and elegant garden in a very little time. ☐

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Cotleigh, Honiton, Devon EX14 9HU. **Open** By prior arrangement from 22 May to 30 September 2018, email williamjamessmithson@gmail.com for details.

Find out more about Arne Maynard's work at **arnemaynard.com**

Turn the page for 16 key plants.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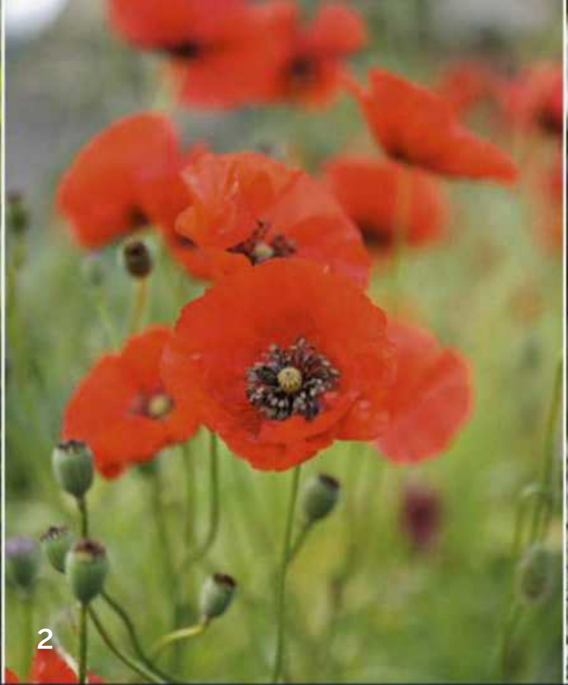
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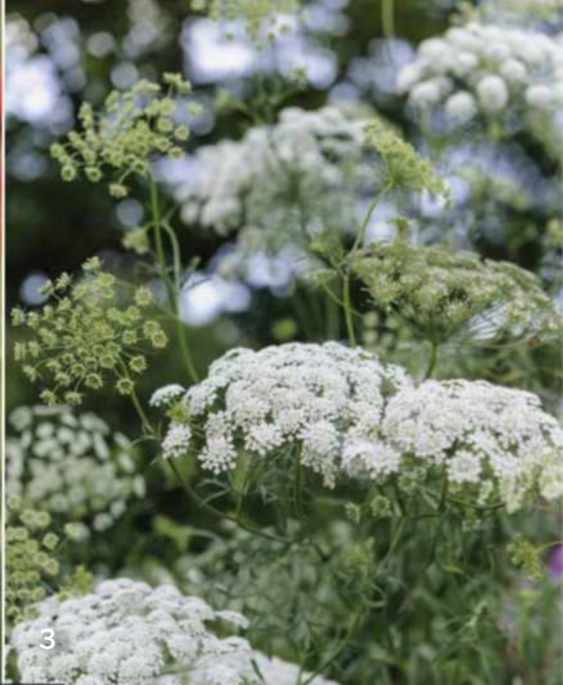
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16 KEY PLANTS

1 *Verbascum blattaria* f. *albiflorum*
This beautiful white-flowered moth mullein is a light, airy biennial that will happily self-sow on lighter soils, and looks great woven through perennial plantings. 1.8m. RHS H6[†].

2 *Papaver rhoeas*
The corn poppy is a wonderful opportunist that will find its way from the border into paving and gravel paths – best grown on poor soils to keep it stocky and upright. 75cm. RHS H7, USDA 3a-10b.

3 *Ammi majus*
Can be grown as either an annual or biennial. Sown in late summer, it will make huge mounds of white, lacy flowers atop bushy, branching plants. 90cm. AGM*. RHS H6.

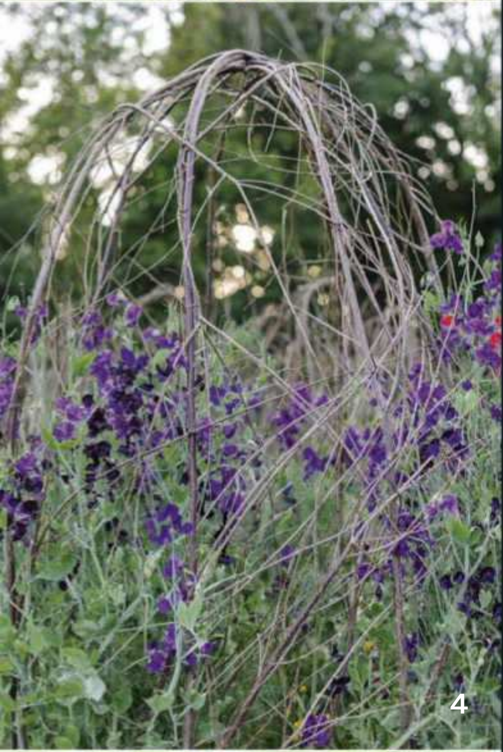
4 *Lathyrus odoratus* Royal Navy Blue
A good, dark-purple-blue sweet pea from the Royal series, which has larger flowers and more blooms than the Spencer type. 2m. RHS H3.

5 *Allium sphaerocephalon*
A tough perennial onion with small, tight, purple flowers on thin, strong stems. Good with grasses. 50cm. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

6 *Angelica sylvestris* 'Vicar's Mead'
A tall, slender biennial or short-lived perennial that can self-sow. Weave through the border or place at the back. 2m. RHS H6.

7 *Verbena bonariensis*
A tall, wiry, short-lived perennial or annual with little foliage and thin green stems. It makes an excellent see-through plant for the border. 2m. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 7a-11.

8 *Stachys byzantina*
The soft grey foliage of this herbaceous perennial is a good foil for stronger colours in the border, and looks particularly good with this hardy *Salvia verticillata* 'Purple Rain'. 50cm. RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.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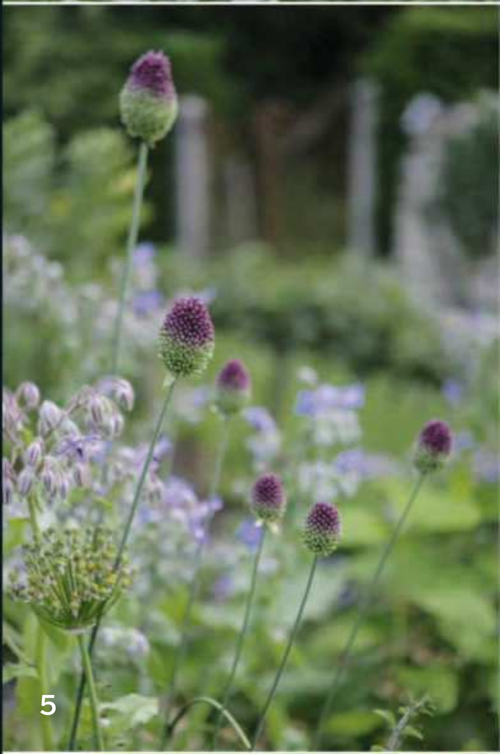
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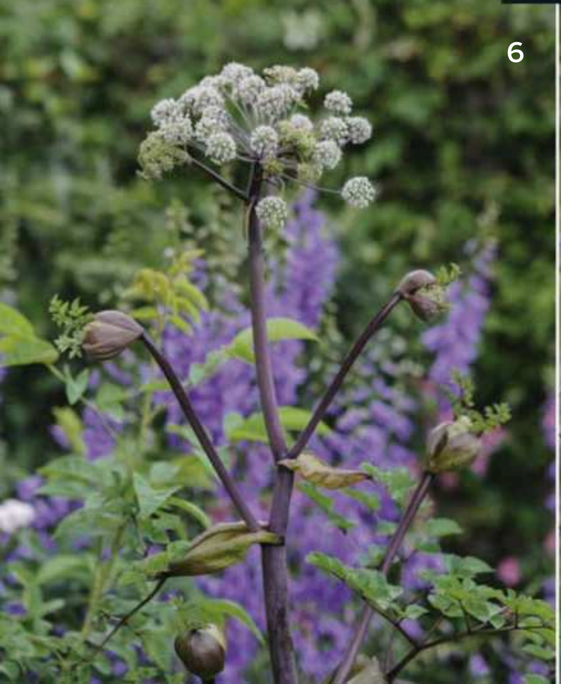
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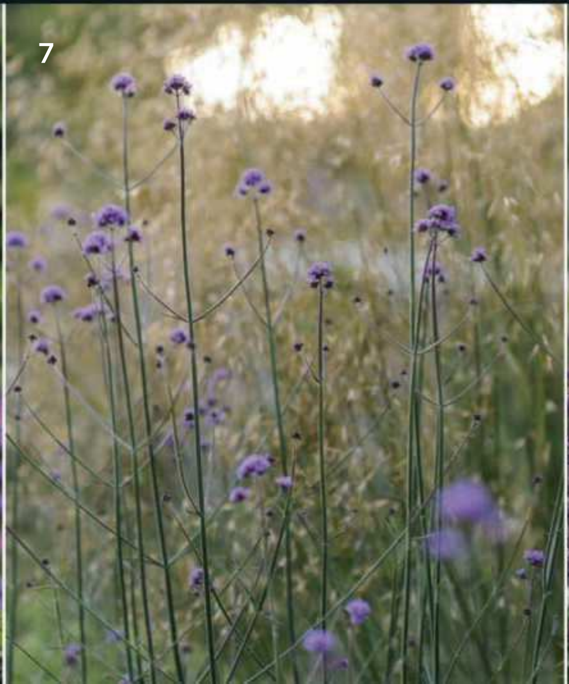
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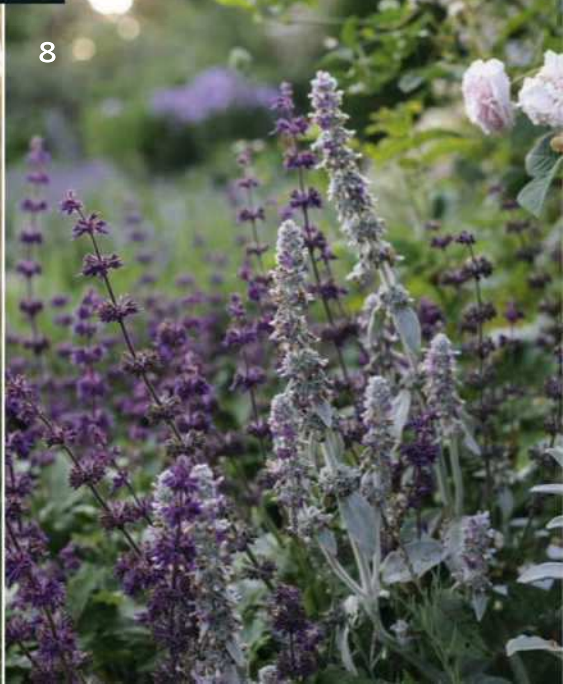
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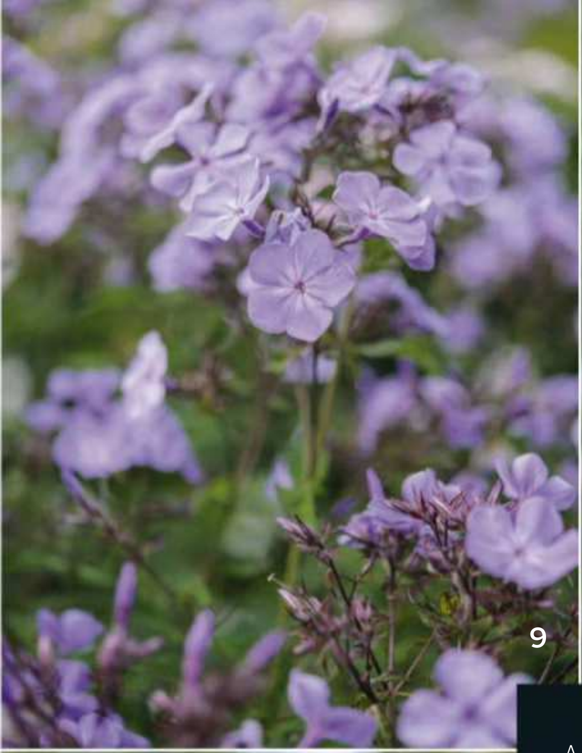
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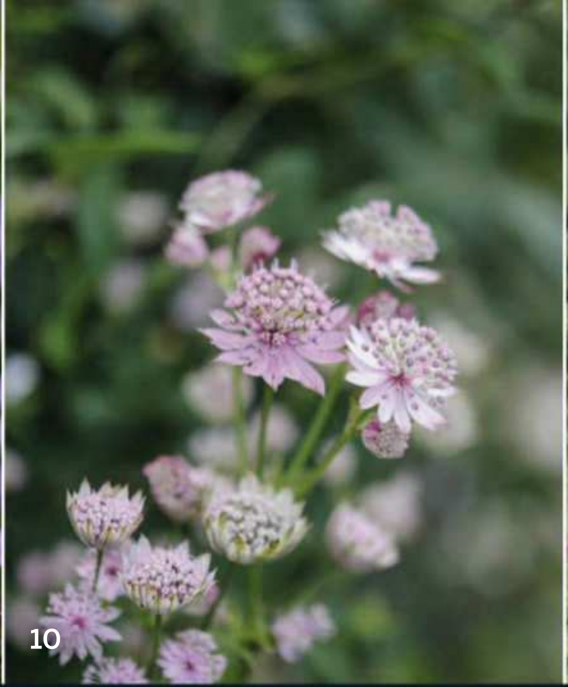
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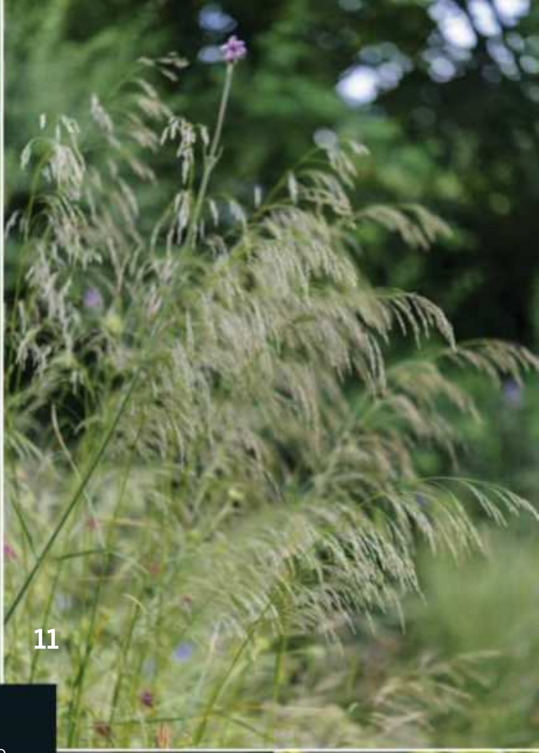
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9 ***Phlox paniculata*** **'Cool of the Evening'**
A good scented phlox with a long season. Even when the flowers go over, the dark stamens remain and look quite structural. 1m. RHS H7.

10 ***Astrantia major*** **var.** ***rosea***
A member of the carrot family, this clump-forming meadow plant has small circular umbels of showy bracts with small pin-head flowers. 80cm. RHS H7, USDA 4a-7b.

11 ***Deschampsia cespitosa***
The new flowerheads of this grass are particularly elegant, and it makes a good link plant between meadow and garden. 80cm. RHS H6, USDA 4a-9b.

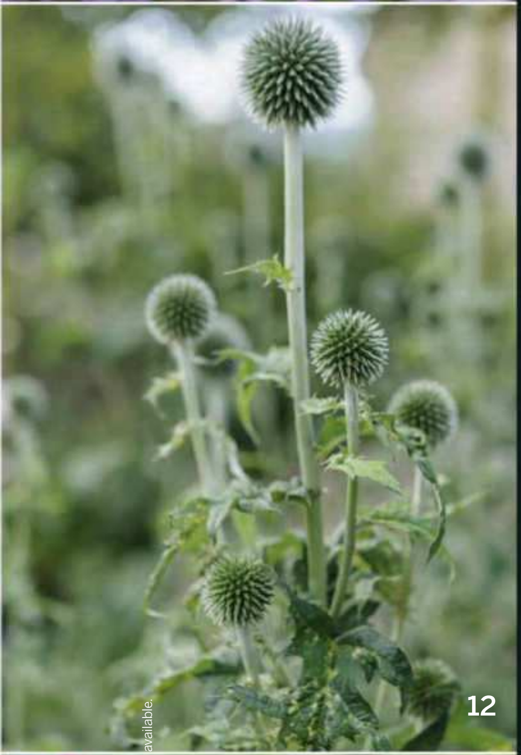
12 ***Echinops bannaticus*** **'Taplow Blue'**
This plant makes tight, prickly balls of small blue flowers above thistly foliage. It looks particularly good planted with slim spires and umbels. 1.4m. RHS H7.

13 ***Rosa*** **'Félicité Parmentier'**
This rose has very delicate pale-pink, flattish, double flowers and a good scent. Once it flowers, it goes on for about four weeks. It also has good grey-green foliage. 1.2m. AGM. RHS H6.

14 ***Dahlia*** **Happy Single Juliet (= 'HS Juliet')**
A good combination of dark foliage and magenta flowers. With deadheading, this plant will go on and on. 90cm. RHS H3.

15 ***Rosa*** **'William Lobb'**
An exquisite rose grown for its rich purple-magenta flowers, which have a fabulous scent. At South Wood Farm it is trained to perfection over hazel beehives. 2m. AGM. RHS H7.

16 ***Salvia*** **'Amistad'**
A very good salvia for flowers in summer onwards. It produces tall spikes of tubular, dark-purple blooms above good foliage and needs no deadheading. Keep it well watered and fed to prolong flowering. 1.2m. AGM. RHS H3.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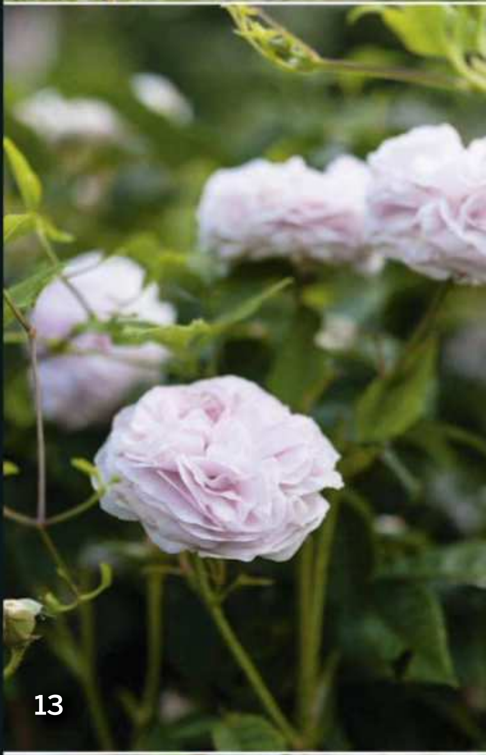
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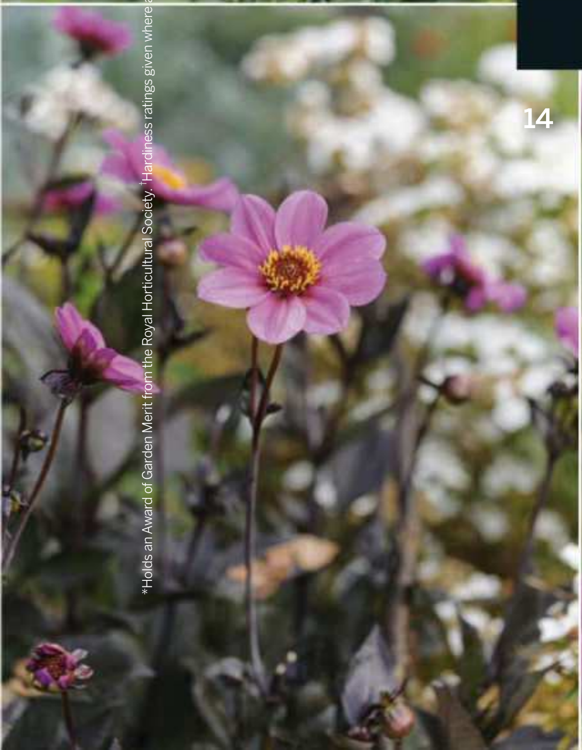
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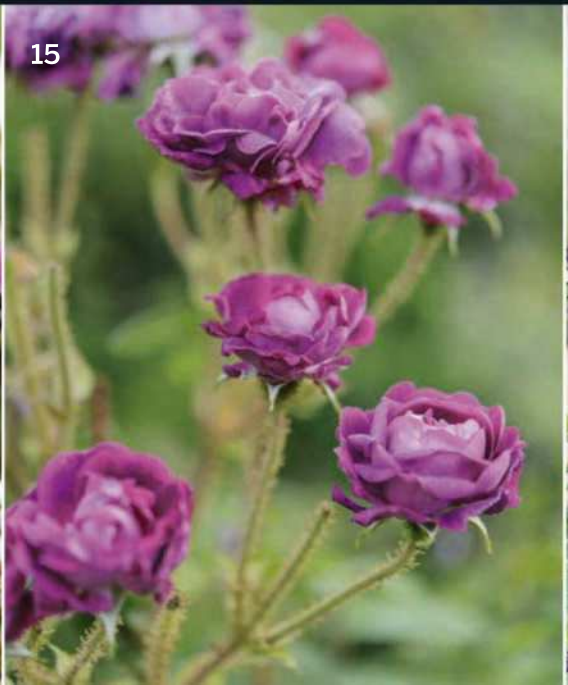
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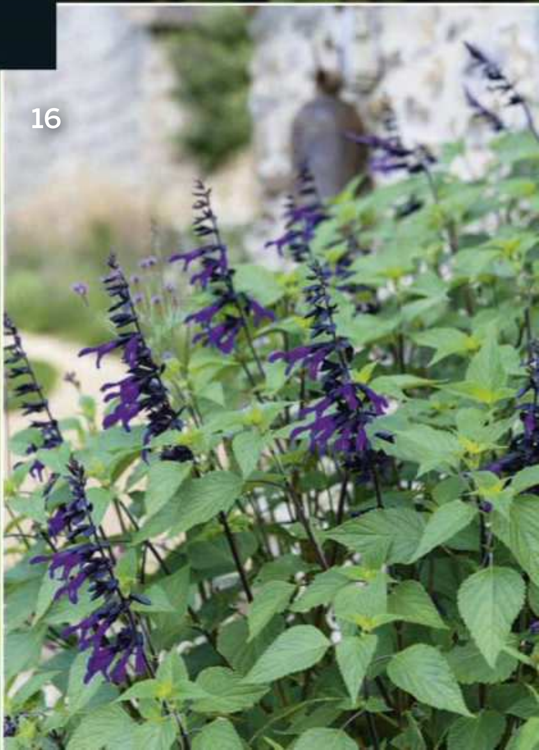
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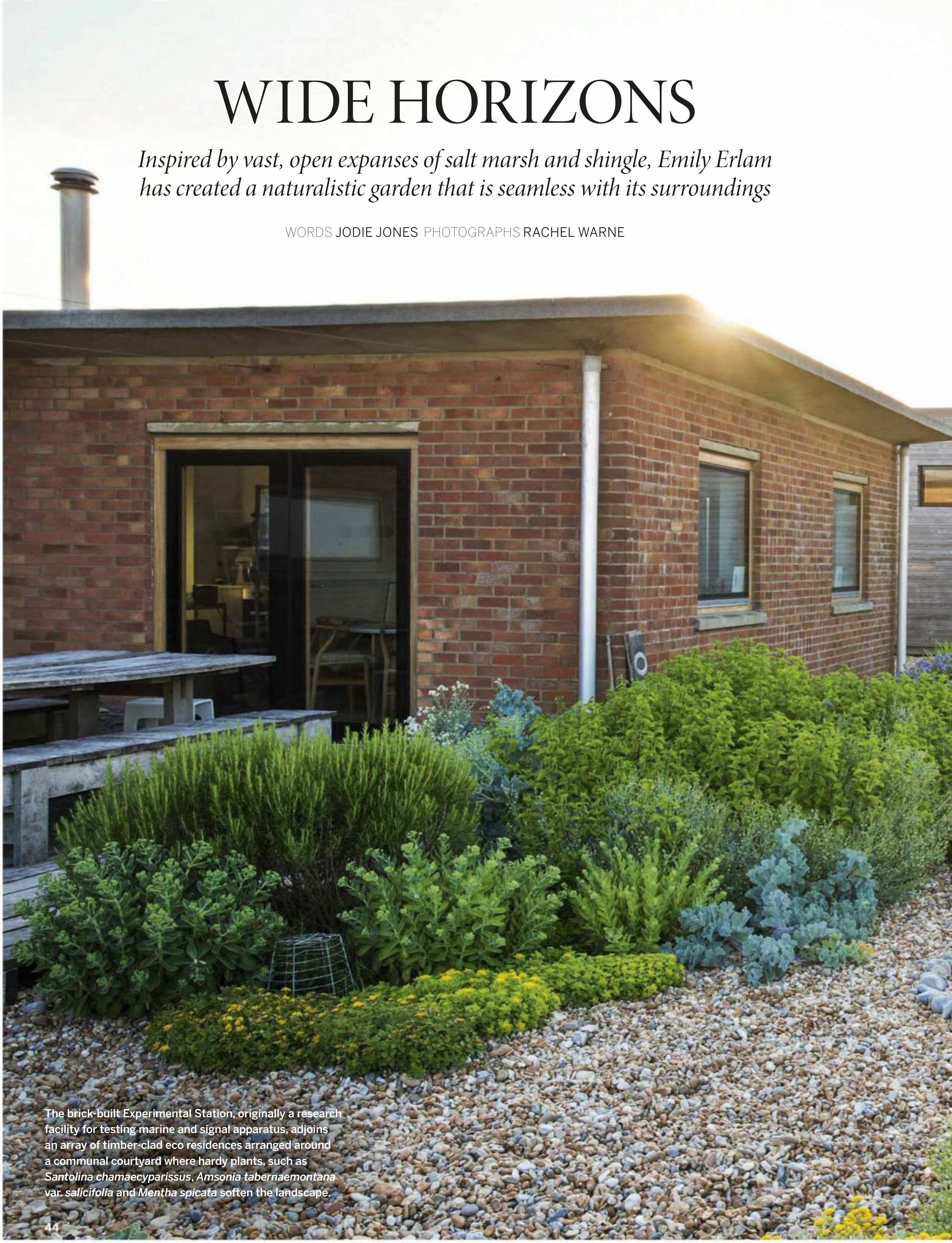
*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. Hardiness ratings given where available.

WIDE HORIZONS

Inspired by vast, open expanses of salt marsh and shingle, Emily Erlam has created a naturalistic garden that is seamless with its surroundings

WORDS **JODIE JONES** PHOTOGRAPHS **RACHEL WARNE**



The brick-built Experimental Station, originally a research facility for testing marine and signal apparatus, adjoins an array of timber-clad eco residences arranged around a communal courtyard where hardy plants, such as *Santolina chamaecyparissus*, *Amsonia tabernaemontana* var. *salicifolia* and *Mentha spicata* soften the landscape.

IN BRIEF

What Exposed seaside garden.
Where Dungeness, Kent.
Size 400 square metres.
Soil Shingle beach.
Climate Harsh winds and low rainfall.
Hardiness zone USDA 8.

Driving to Dungeness across the low expanse of Romney Marsh, the land seems to flatten even further, as if pressed down by the enormous sky. Modest dwellings are scattered sparsely across the shingle, among them Prospect Cottage, where Derek Jarman famously made a garden that is now gently subsiding into the beach. Follow this road to its conclusion and you are confronted by three Dungeness landmarks – the monolithic nuclear power station, a black-and-white lighthouse, and the station terminus for a now defunct narrow-gauge railway. Just before you reach the station car park is a converted research station building where, six years ago, Emily Erlam was invited to create a garden.

It could have been a daunting prospect. “It’s a harsh environment, with low rainfall, a punishing easterly wind, and not a jot of protection,” she says. “Plus, two thirds of the garden is a Site of Special Scientific Interest [SSSI], so you can’t even walk on it, let alone replant it.” But the limitations were helpful, allowing her to focus on what the site would allow. “I always start with the clients’ wishes. I designed where they would sit, where they could walk, and what plants would embellish the space.”

The single-storey, L-shaped building has stunning views on two sides. To the east, a huge picture window looks out over the SSSI and on to the sea. In the crook of the building to the north, French doors lead on to a worn wooden deck that steps down into the ornamental part of the garden where mounds of rosemary, *Santolina* and *Amsonia* soften the change in level. Spreading carpets of *Persicaria* and *Crambe maritima* recur everywhere, delineating the curves of a sinuous path through the greenery.

“Almost everything I planted here is growing wild in some form on the beach beyond,” says Emily. “It was important that the garden blended with its surroundings, while keeping its own integrity. That’s why I planted a loose windbarrier of *Elaeagnus* ‘Quicksilver’ to screen the house from the neighbouring property, instead of a more solid hedge. It’s also why I climbed the lighthouse and used the most interesting shapes from the surrounding land mass on which to base the form of the beds and paths.” Observing how areas of bare shingle tended to sink lower than areas protected by mats of vegetation, Emily banked up her planting areas to emulate the effect. “We also heaped imported topsoil on these beds, sitting on a weed-suppressing membrane, then topped off with more shingle.”

> I CELEBRATED WHAT WAS HERE AND CREATED A BACKDROP FOR THE OWNERS TO LIVE IN

The planting was partially inspired by Piet Oudolf’s technique of ribboning and interweaving plants. “We also discussed how far to echo Derek Jarman’s garden, but it has become so iconic we didn’t want to end up copying it,” says Emily. Even the planting palette is quite different. “I love working with colour, so we intertwined two strands – one of purple and pink, the other of bright green, yellow and blue.”

Mounds of santolina create permanent structure, but there are also seasonal peaks that animate the effect. In May the garden has a delicacy typified by the pure-white flowers of the sea kale that Emily likens to a beautiful moonscape. By July, the palette intensifies with bold splashes of colour from iris, *Sesleria autumnalis*, *Achillea* ‘Moonshine’, *Salvia nemorosa* ‘Amethyst’, thyme, *Allium sphaerocephalon* and *Agastache* ‘Blackadder’. The *Amsonia*, blanketed with clear-blue flowers in summer, modulates into a rich autumnal palette of butter-yellow foliage, complemented by tawny pink *Sedum* and *Persicaria*.

The garden has now settled comfortably into its surroundings. Over time, the owners have introduced flotsam and jetsam, stone circles and two tiny, cast iron lizards, as well as maintaining a loose expansiveness in the planting. “I love the way it has matured,” says Emily. “I never think it is my job to decorate a garden. I just create a setting in which the owners can make themselves at home.” □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Find out more about Emily Erlam’s work at **erlamstudio.com**

Facing page

Top row *Santolina chamaecyparissus* (left) and *Amsonia tabernaemontana* var. *salicifolia* (right) are key plants in the yellow and blue colour palette, combining with *Persicaria affinis* ‘Darjeeling Red’ and *Salvia nemorosa* ‘Amethyst’ (centre).

Second row *Verbena bonariensis* mingles with *Allium sphaerocephalum*; the old black-and-white lighthouse was decommissioned in 1960 and is now a museum; the shapely curry plant *Helichrysum italicum* creates a splash of colour.

Third row View towards the narrow gauge railway; rosemary, mint and self-seeded poppies line the winding path dotted with stone circles; Emily relaxes in the gravel seating area with echoes of the shingle beach beyond.

Bottom row Hummocky plants, such as *Sedum selskianum*, provide structure, while salvaged objects create interest.

Key plants for a coastal location

1 *Amsonia tabernaemontana* var. *salicifolia*
One of the real heroes of the garden for its shape and structure, with blue flowers in summer and narrow, willow-like leaves that turn yellow in autumn.
60cm. RHS H5, USDA 3a-9b†.

2 *Salvia nemorosa* 'Amethyst'
Introduces dainty prettiness to the garden, and works well with the *Persicaria*. 60cm. AGM*. RHS H7.

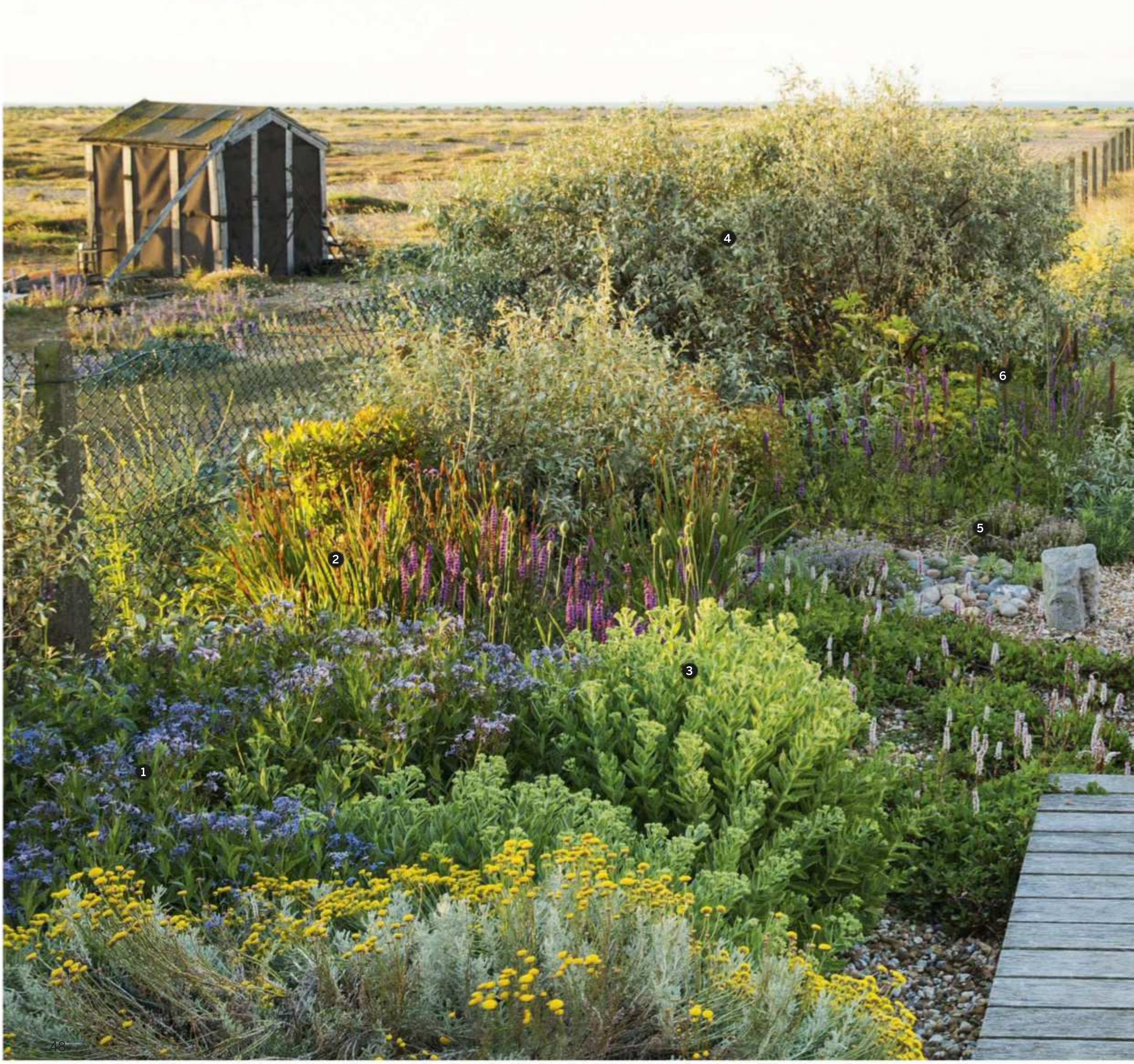
3 *Hylotelephium* 'Matrona'
Stonecrops, usually in their shorter forms, grow widely in Dungeness. *Hylotelephium* 'Matrona' has been a real success in that it provides bold architectural structure at a time when the garden is waning, with exquisite browny-pink heads picking up the flowers of *Persicaria* as they turn from pink to deep red. 60cm. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 3a-9b.

4 *Elaeagnus* 'Quicksilver'
This delightful *Eleagnus* is so different from the rest of the genus and makes an elegant, silver backdrop to the garden. It grows happily here and makes good screening without feeling heavy.
4m. RHS H5, USDA 3a-7b.

5 *Thymus* 'Doone Valley'
Thyme is one of Emily's all-time favourite plants, and she finds the aromatic 'Doone Valley' has lovely structure and flowers. 10cm. RHS H5.

6 *Digitalis parviflora*
This plant, with its brownish-red flowers, picks up the rustiness of the old bits of architecture on the beach
60cm. AGM. RHS H5.

7 *Sesleria autumnalis*
A good counterfoil to lots of different colours, particularly early in the season, but also in the autumn, when its flower



heads look wonderful.
60cm. RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

8 ***Rosemarinus officinalis***
With its aromatic leaves and bushy habit, rosemary is invaluable for fragrance and good mid-green structure. 2m. RHS H4, USDA 8a-10b.

9 ***Persicaria affinis*** **'Darjeeling Red'**
A very versatile and underrated plant. Excellent for edging and to introduce simple structure. It gives so much value throughout the year. 25cm. AGM. RHS H7.

10 ***Santolina chamaecyparissus***
One of Emily's go-to favourite plants. She loves the leaf structure, although she sometimes cuts off the yellow flowers if they don't complement the scheme. Here, however, it works on every level. 60cm. RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.

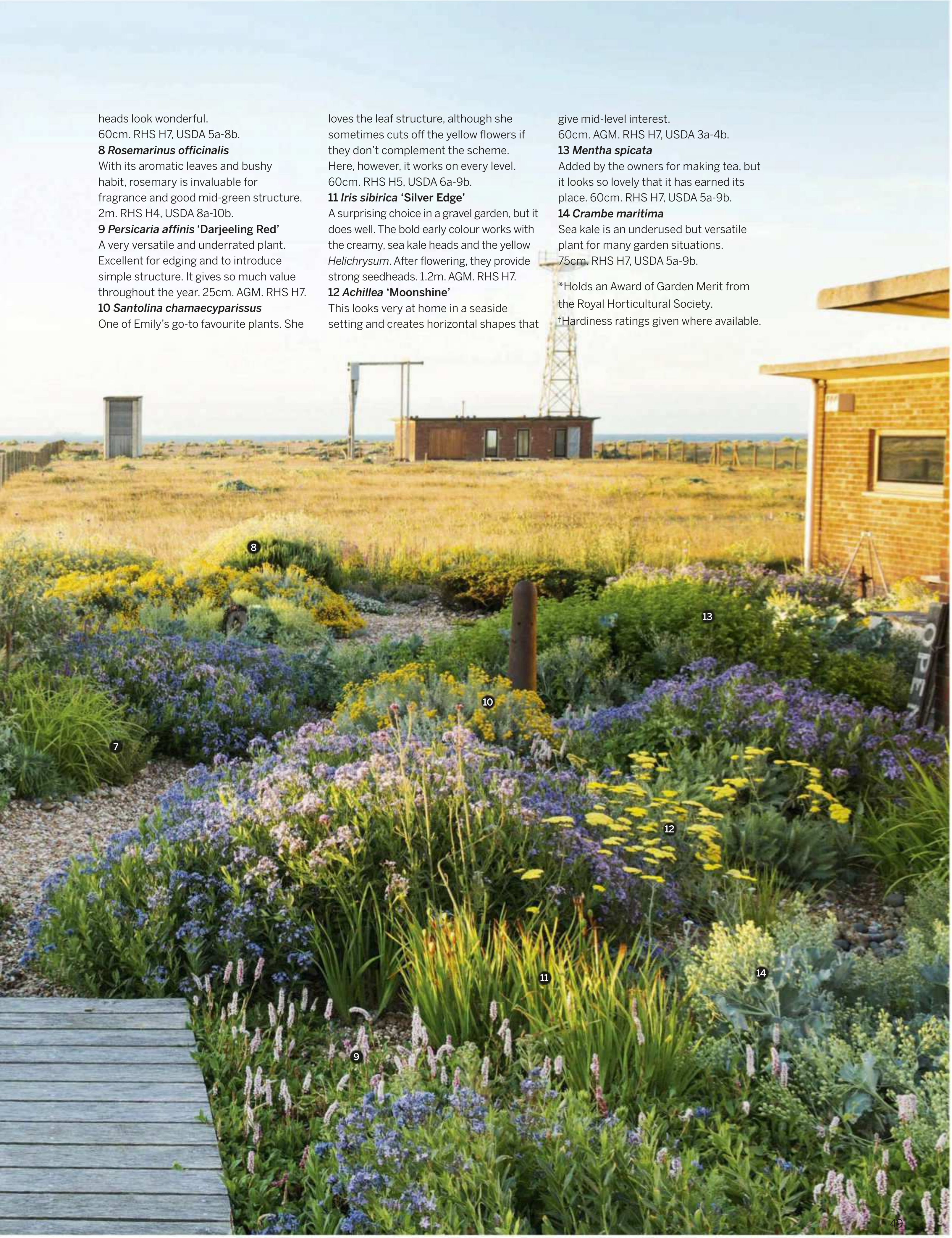
11 ***Iris sibirica*** **'Silver Edge'**
A surprising choice in a gravel garden, but it does well. The bold early colour works with the creamy, sea kale heads and the yellow *Helichrysum*. After flowering, they provide strong seedheads. 1.2m. AGM. RHS H7.

12 ***Achillea*** **'Moonshine'**
This looks very at home in a seaside setting and creates horizontal shapes that give mid-level interest.
60cm. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 3a-4b.

13 ***Mentha spicata***
Added by the owners for making tea, but it looks so lovely that it has earned its place. 60cm. RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.

14 ***Crambe maritima***
Sea kale is an underused but versatile plant for many garden situations.
75cm. RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.

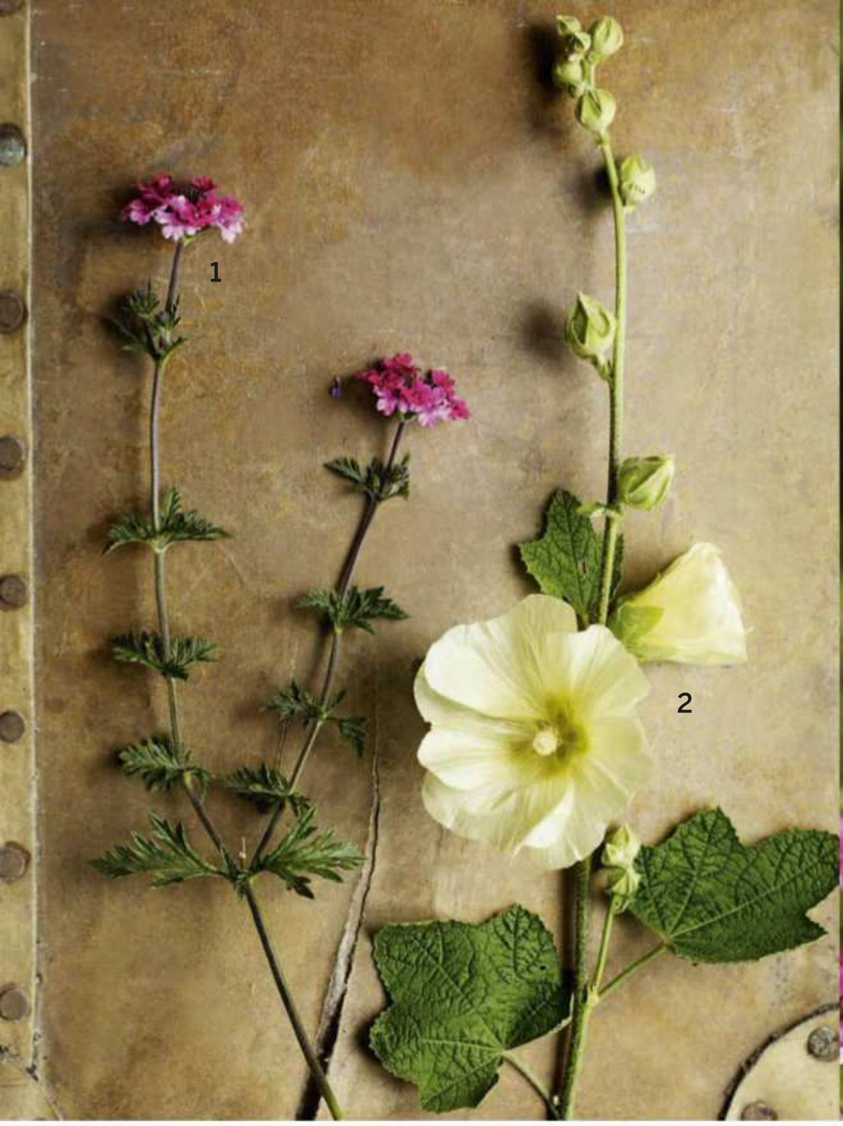
*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.



SAVING GRACE

As the gardens at Sissinghurst come into full bloom, head gardener Troy Scott Smith creates three delicate container displays that aim to complement the grace of natural plantings

WORDS **TROY SCOTT SMITH** PHOTOGRAPHS **ANDREW MONTGOMERY**



GENEROUS WELCOME

This bronze urn, which once stood in the Parc de Bagatelle in Paris, is one of several given to Vita in 1932 by her mother, and deserves to be the display's main star. I've filled it with a single plant, *Glandularia* 'Sissinghurst', but surrounded it with complementary plants allowed to self-seed. No gardener could ever plant with the grace with which plants group themselves and it's often more useful to get the atmosphere of a container right rather than a prescribed planting plan.

How to achieve the look

Despite the flamboyance of the bronze vase, I didn't want it to make a grand announcement, but rather provide an unpretentious and generous welcome. Just as I love seeing fallen petals beneath a flower arrangement, I wanted the same feeling here. To achieve this I restricted planting within the vase to the rich-pink *Glandularia* 'Sissinghurst', an old cultivar that was given to the gardeners here at Sissinghurst in the mid 1970s and later named after the garden, but I've also encouraged the self seeding of both *Alcea rugosa* and *Erigeron karvinskianus* beneath and around the urn.

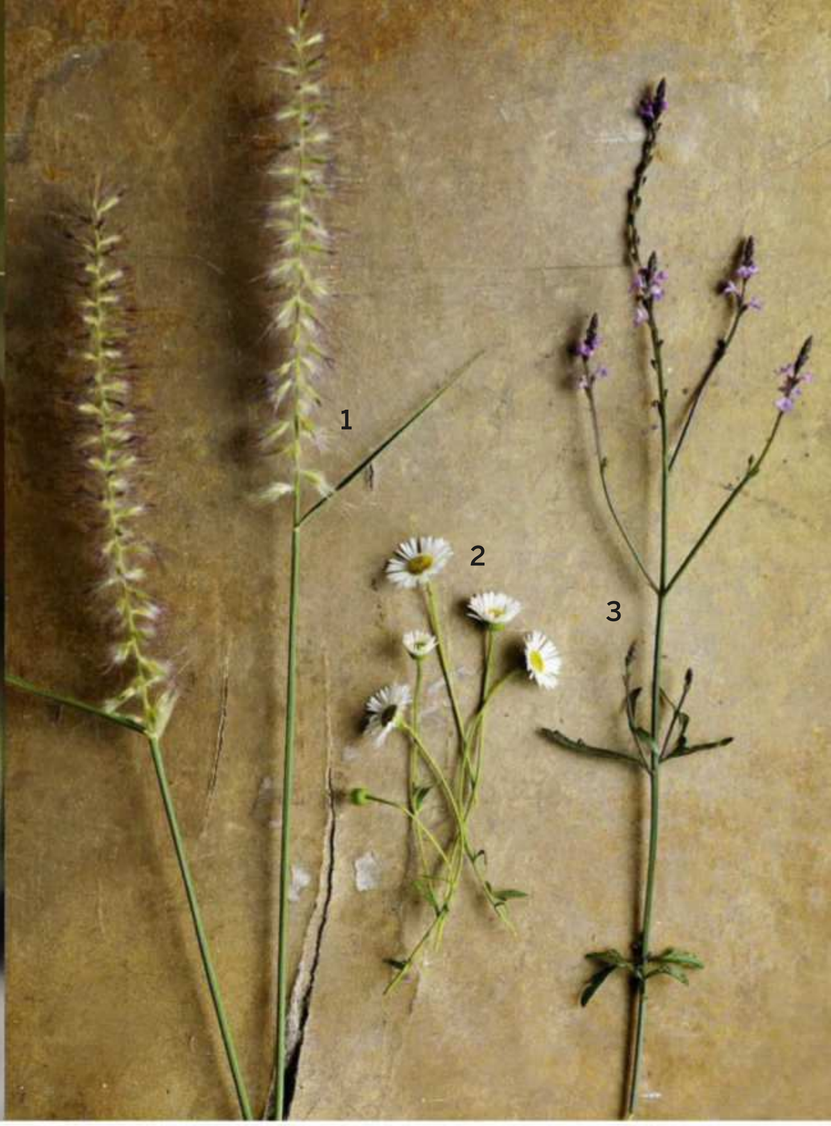
The *Glandularia* has been delighting our visitors since we planted it in early May with its fantastic lightly scrambling shoots each topped with pink flowers. Last season I planted it in terracotta pots in tandem with the violet-blue *Heliotropium arborescens* 'Princess Marina', a combination that provided colour and great scent throughout the whole summer.

The colour is cooled by the hollyhock, *Alcea rugosa.* Although short-lived, hollyhocks freely self-seed if spent flower spikes are left in place, and can establish colonies in the garden that persist for years. These self-sown seedlings I find far preferable to those planted in a border as the sparseness of the foliage around them means they're less susceptible to rust. This pale-yellow-flowered species with fig leaf-shaped foliage, is a longer-lived perennial and less prone to rust.

Plants

1 *Glandularia* 'Sissinghurst'
Not hardy so should be overwintered under glass and cuttings taken to ensure vigorous plants the following season. Good for containers or at the front of a border. 20cm. AGM*. RHS H3, USDA 7b-10b†.
2 *Alcea rugosa*
Single, pale-yellow flowers typically appear from late spring to midsummer. Cut back after the first flowers are almost spent to encourage new, albeit shorter, flower spikes. Deadheading and removing flower spikes after blooming will encourage plants to live longer.
1.5m. USDA 4a-8b.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.



THREE OF A KIND

Pots are generally placed in prominent places, so whatever you choose to plant in them needs to look good. This means changing the display regularly through the season, which inevitably means you should have multiple pots with things 'coming on', in readiness to bring out into the spotlight when they are about to perform. With this pot I deliberately chose plants that continue to look good for weeks, if not months on end with very little effort.

How to achieve the look

In general I find displays containing either a single plant, such as with the *Glandularia* on the previous page, or a combination of three plants usually work best. In this arrangement I chose three mutually compatible plants that work in harmony with each other, both in terms of 'feel' and flowering longevity. The overall effect is soft and diffused yet sculptural, with the slender, pale-pink brushes of the *Pennisetum orientale* 'Shogun' floating above the mound of light-grey foliage to great effect.

Choose as deep a pot as possible, to get the maximum depth of soil. It must have a hole in the bottom with crocks spread over for drainage. In most of our pots we use peat-free compost with added grit, in addition slow-release fertiliser and vine weevil control is included. I like to use grit for the top of the pot as an aesthetic dressing and to aid watering, which with large pots such as this, is required as often as three times a week in summer.

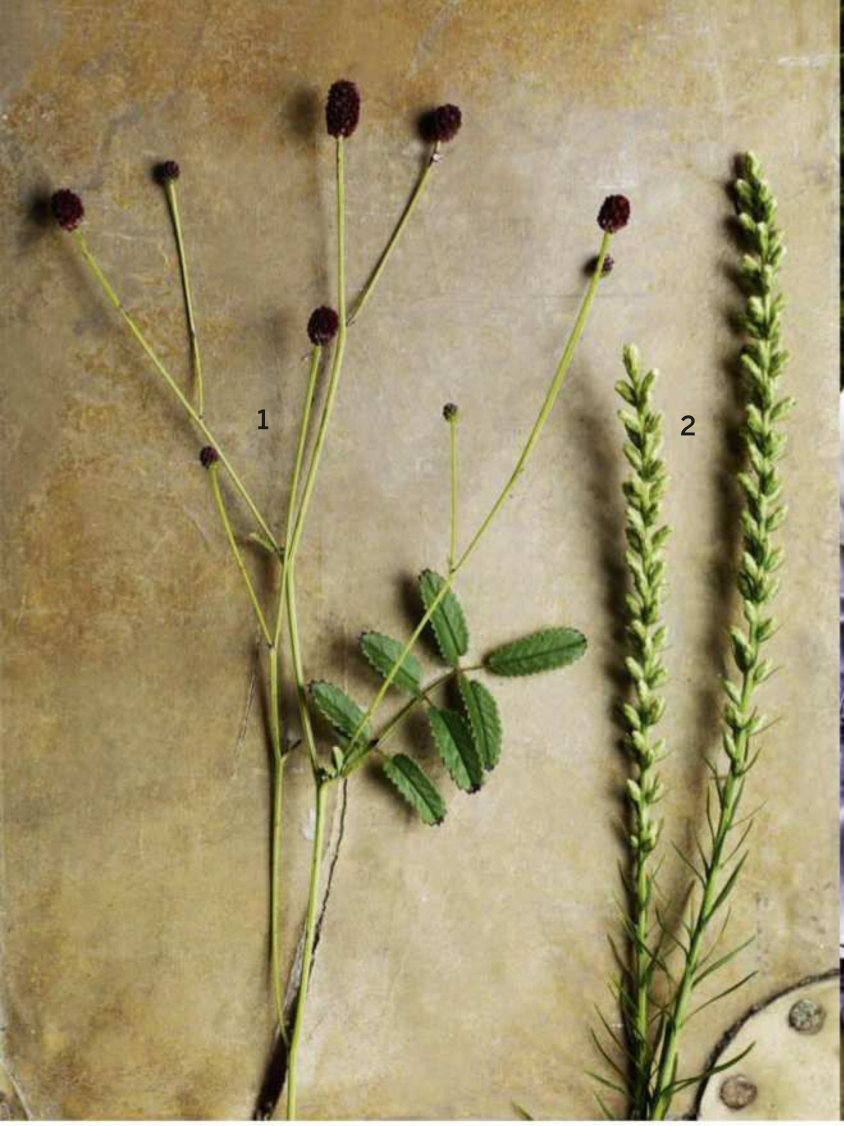
Most importantly good forward planning is critical. Wherever possible you should try to get to know how your reserve bench of plants performs and when they'll shine to ensure your pot has a seamless succession of flowering display. Through the season I try to take notes and make drawings as an aide memoire of successes and failures, flowering times and the relative sociability or otherwise of the various companions. Photographs taken at regular intervals would also serve this purpose well.

Plants

1 *Pennisetum orientale* 'Shogun'
Upright, blush-pink flowers are flecked with purple and appear from midsummer onwards.
1.2m. RHS H3.

2 *Erigeron karvinskianus*
The Mexican fleabane produces masses of small, daisy-like flowers from mid-May to October, and requires little or no maintenance.
30cm. AGM. RHS H5.

3 *Verbena officinalis* var. *grandiflora* 'Bampton'
Another easy plant that produces airy, lavender-pink flowers from mid-June right through to September.
90cm. RHS H6.



LIVING HISTORY

Long before Vita and Harold bought Sissinghurst in 1930, the Elizabethan manor house had been used as the local workhouse, and Vita and Harold rescued several 'coppers' from its 19th-century laundry to reflect their interest in the house's history and the lives of its previous residents. In total they placed three coppers in the garden one in the Lower Courtyard, one in the Phlox Garden and this one that stands at the centre of the Cottage Garden.

How to achieve the look

Old laundry pots and dolly tubs are relatively easy to source from flea markets and reclamation yards and will develop a similar patina to this 'copper' albeit on a smaller scale. You'll need to drill four to five drainage holes with a sharp 8-10mm bit and cover with crocks so they can drain freely, but they work well as containers for a looser style of planting.

For this pot I've opted for an instinctive and intuitive display that I thought would either be a joyous success or fail gloriously. It's a combination of two plants that I hoped with their contrast in flower shape and form would provide not only a potency within the display but also an energy and strength equal to the setting. The main protagonist is the low-growing *Sanguisorba* 'Tanna', which has tight, wine-red flower heads that emerge from a neat, rounded cushion of small, green leaves. The neat, oval bobbles measure around 50mm in length and appear from June until mid-August.

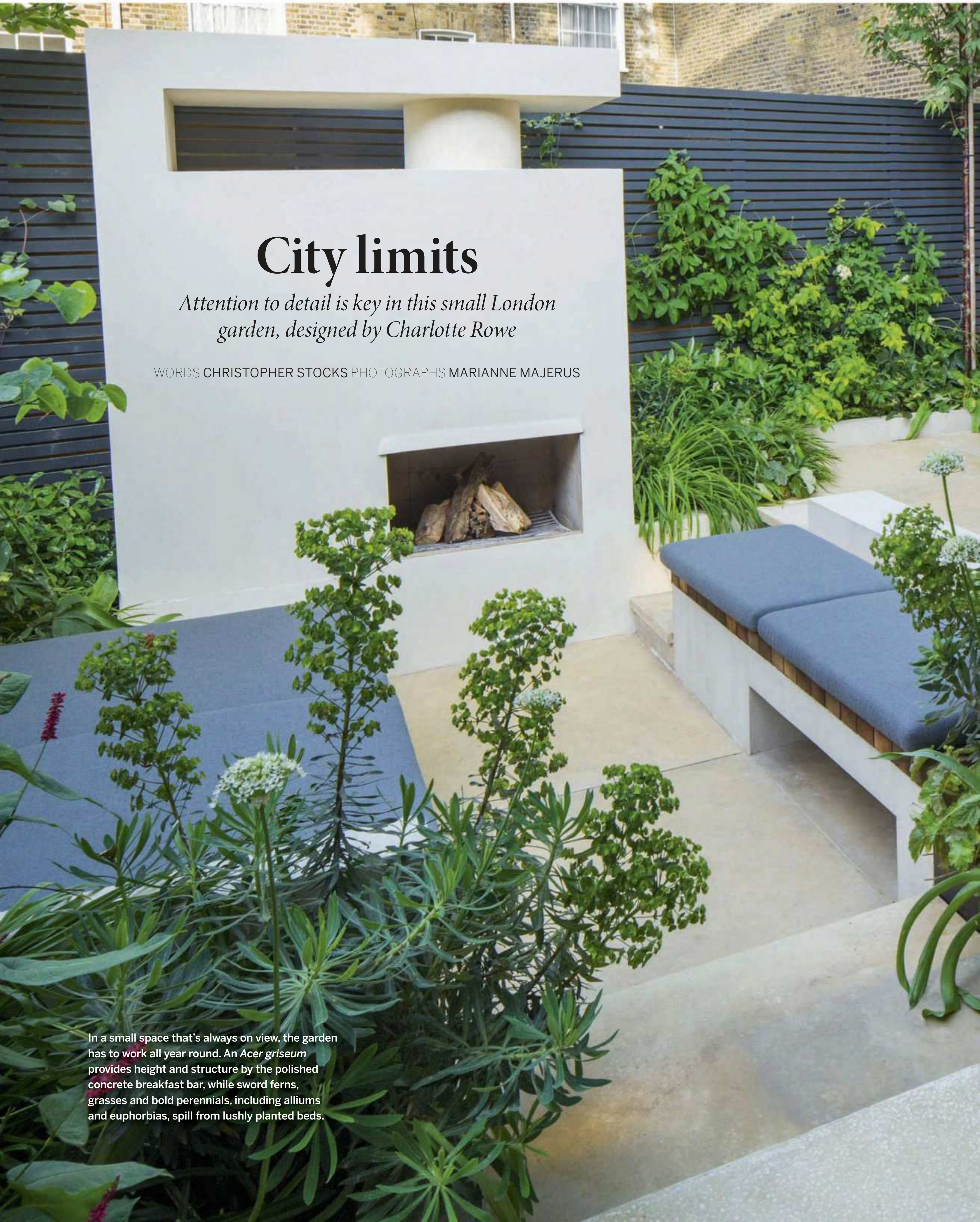
Over the summer the flower heads gently age to a dark, chocolate-brown, then form a seedhead that endures until late winter. Alongside it I have planted *Liatris spicata* 'Floristan Weiss', a plant I love to weave into my planting to act as a motif running through the border.

Both plants need fertile, moist soil to flower well, and are best in full sun or semi-shade. They are easy, undemanding plants, requiring very little maintenance and are pest and disease free.

Plants

1 *Sanguisorba* 'Tanna'
The cultivar is more tolerant of drier conditions than some others of its tribe and therefore more suited to pot culture. It is fully hardy and can be propagated by division. 50cm. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

2 *Liatris spicata* 'Floristan Weiss'
The bottlebrush-like, creamy-white flowers of this American perennial open from top to bottom from mid to late summer. It also has attractive, narrow, grass-like foliage, and can be propagated by seed in autumn or from division in spring. 60cm. USDA 3a-8b.

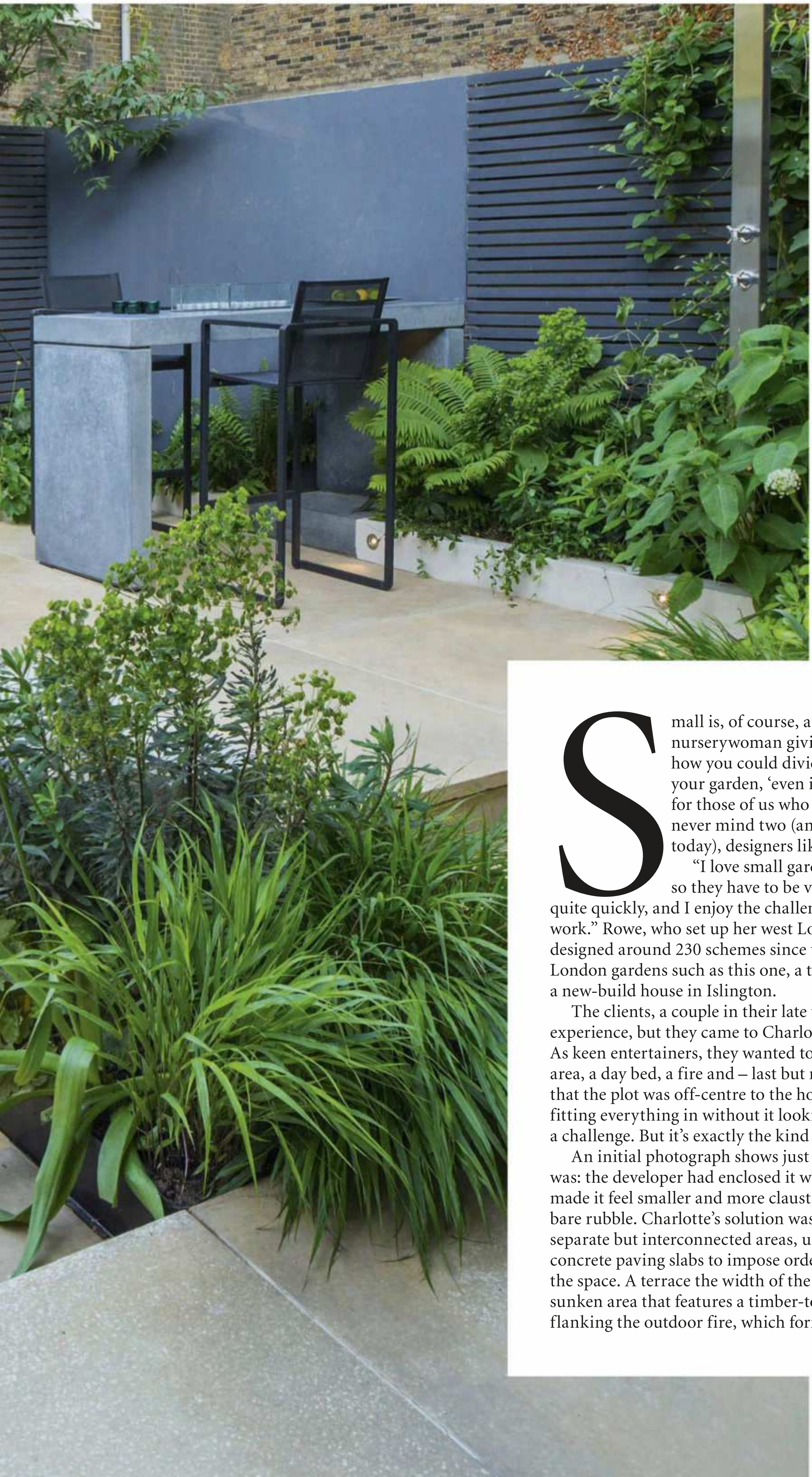


City limits

Attention to detail is key in this small London garden, designed by Charlotte Rowe

WORDS CHRISTOPHER STOCKS PHOTOGRAPHS MARIANNE MAJERUS

In a small space that's always on view, the garden has to work all year round. An *Acer griseum* provides height and structure by the polished concrete breakfast bar, while sword ferns, grasses and bold perennials, including alliums and euphorbias, spill from lushly planted beds.



IN BRIEF

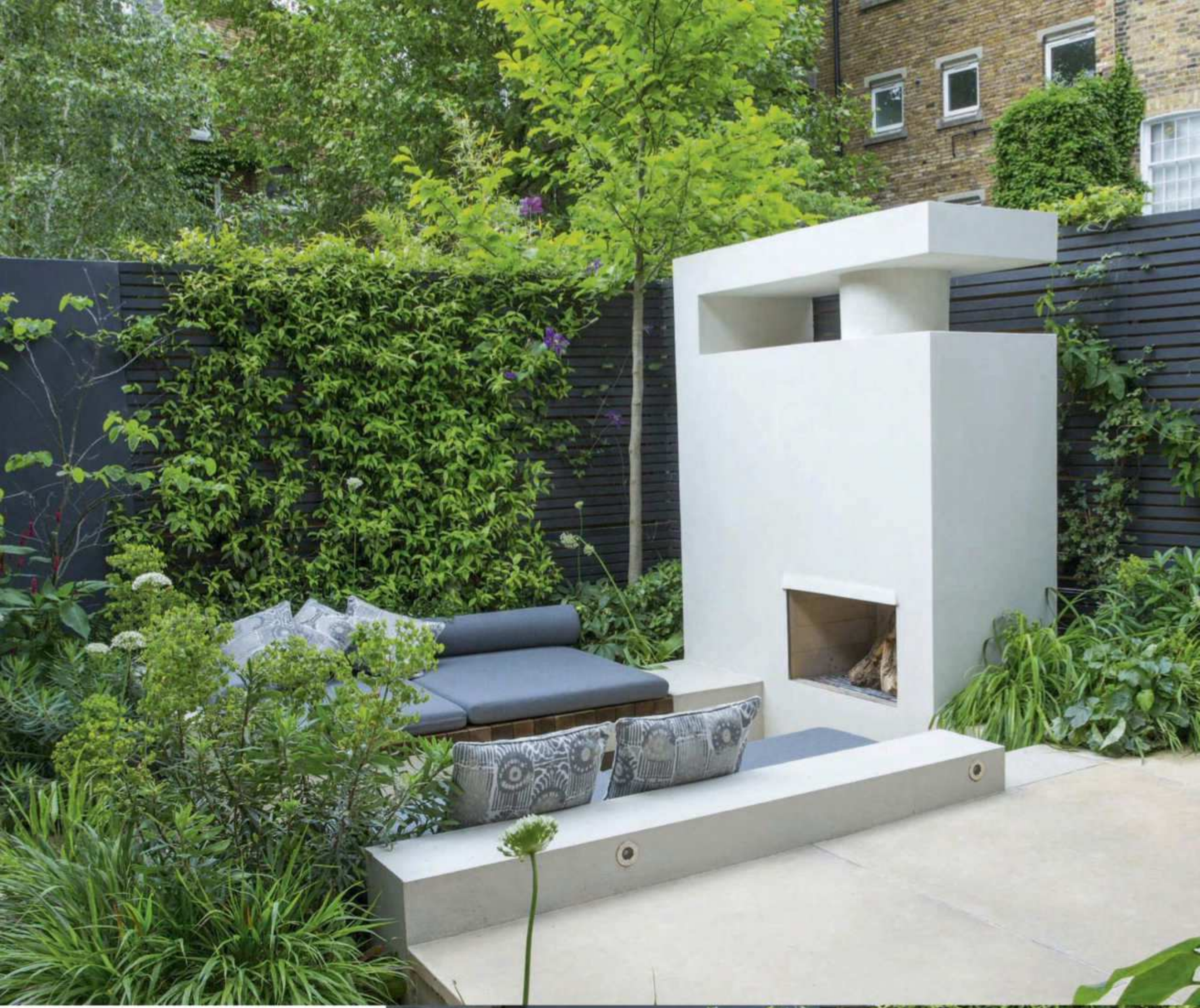
What Small urban garden.
Where Islington, north London.
Size 38 square metres.
Soil Peat-free compost over London clay.
Climate Mild.
Hardiness zone USDA 8.

Small is, of course, a relative term. I remember a leading nurserywoman giving a talk in which she explained how you could divide winter aconites every year to fill your garden, ‘even if you only have an acre or two’. But for those of us who can only dream of having one acre, never mind two (and that’s surely the majority of people today), designers like Charlotte Rowe are a godsend.

“I love small gardens,” she says. “Every inch matters, so they have to be very finely detailed. You can do them quite quickly, and I enjoy the challenge of making awkward spaces really work.” Rowe, who set up her west London-based practice in 2004, has designed around 230 schemes since then. Most of them are small London gardens such as this one, a tiny, east-facing courtyard behind a new-build house in Islington.

The clients, a couple in their late thirties, had no previous gardening experience, but they came to Charlotte with quite an extensive brief. As keen entertainers, they wanted to include a breakfast bar, a dance area, a day bed, a fire and – last but not least – a hot shower. Given that the plot was off-centre to the house and 38 square metres in extent, fitting everything in without it looking cluttered was always going to be a challenge. But it’s exactly the kind of challenge Charlotte relishes.

An initial photograph shows just how unpromising the original plot was: the developer had enclosed it with pallet-like fencing, which only made it feel smaller and more claustrophobic, while the ground was bare rubble. Charlotte’s solution was to divide the area into several separate but interconnected areas, using a grid of large-format, polished concrete paving slabs to impose order, with different levels to break up the space. A terrace the width of the house leads down, on the left, to a sunken area that features a timber-topped day bed and a built-in bench flanking the outdoor fire, which forms a sculptural element in its own ▷



Clockwise from above

Trachelospermum jasminoides and *Akebia quinata* climb the trellises to the left and right of the fireplace, with a slender *Magnolia kobus* in between.

The outdoor shower rises out of a mix of green foliage that includes the sword fern *Polystichum munitum*.

The low grass *Hakonechloa macra* is paired with *Euphorbia characias* 'Humpty Dumpty' to create contrast in both form and texture.

Although the colour palette is largely restricted to green and white Charlotte has added a punch of colour with the deep-crimson flowers of *Persicaria amplexicaulis* Taurus (= 'Blotau') here cooled by the white *Allium nigrum*.

I LOVE SMALL GARDENS; EVERY INCH MATTERS SO THEY HAVE TO BE VERY FINELY DETAILED

▷ right. “Fires are a bit of a trademark for us now,” Charlotte says. “Ages ago [the designer] Luciano Giubbilei did one in Ladbroke Square that I really liked, but I couldn’t find anyone to make one for us, so in the end we constructed one ourselves for my own garden, and since then we’ve designed a lot.”

Like the fire, all the furniture was specially made for the garden. “There’s a great range of outdoor furniture these days,” Charlotte says. “Everyone thinks it should be cheaper than indoor furniture, but it’s not. When you fit a kitchen, you might spend a lot on appliances, then save money by buying Ikea carcasses. But garden furniture has to be much better made if it’s going to stand outside in all weathers, and every screw and fitting has to be stainless steel – which is why it’s expensive.”

On the right-hand side, a larger raised area forms the dance floor, with a polished concrete breakfast bar cantilevered out from the boundary wall and, rising from the thickly planted border, the hot shower. “Our gardens are very structured, but we also do very rich planting,” Charlotte points out. That’s certainly the case here. Each element of the design is framed by a dense mix of plants, with a deep burgundy and russet colour palette. “One of the clients is from Brazil,” Charlotte says, “and we wanted the garden to look lush and leafy for him.”

“In a small garden like this, where you see everything at once, every plant has to work all year round,” she adds. Here she’s used small trees, such as *Acer griseum*, *Magnolia kobus* and *Arbutus unedo* for height, with shrubs, such as *Pittosporum tobira* ‘Nanum’, for structure, underplanted with *Euphorbia characias* ‘Humpty Dumpty’, *Persicaria amplexicaulis* Taurus (= ‘Blotau’), *Acanthus spinosus* and the grass, *Hakonechloa macra*. “We used to use a lot of *Stipa tenuissima*,” Charlotte says, “but we’ve found that it only lasts five or six years.”

As the pallet fencing couldn’t be removed, Charlotte’s solution was to clad it in thin strips of wood to form a trellis, supporting climbers such as *Trachelospermum jasminoides*, *Akebia quinata* and *Clematis* ‘Perrin’s Pride’. To give the impression of solid walls, marine ply was attached, given a thin cement render, then painted the same marine blue as the trelliswork. It’s a clever finishing touch, typical of Charlotte’s long experience and her ability to transform unpromising sites into attractive, useful and hard-working gardens, balancing strong architectural elements with sophisticated planting. ❑

USEFUL INFORMATION

Find out more about Charlotte’s work at **charlotterowe.com**

HORTICULTURAL WHO'S WHO

JAMES BASSON

The award-winning designer on the perils of pandering to wealthy expats, why plants need to go where they want to grow and his hi-tech approach to successful plant combinations

WORDS **JODIE JONES** PORTRAIT **CHARLIE HOPKINSON**

When James Basson's Maltese quarry garden was named Best in Show at Chelsea last year, public opinion was divided. Some argued that a glorified hole in the ground had no place at the greatest flower show on earth, while others saw it as a sublime expression of the late, great Beth Chatto's maxim of 'right plant, right place'.

For James, who lives in the south of France, it was a natural expression of all he holds dear in garden making. "There is no beauty in forcing a plant to grow somewhere it doesn't want to be," he says. "We were fortunate to get permission to show some real rarities that have not been seen outside Malta before, but many of the plants are common enough at home in the Cotè d'Azur."

James has made an international name for himself as a champion of Mediterranean gardening with Mediterranean plants but, growing up on the rural edge of suburban Beaconsfield, he wasn't interested in horticulture. "I was the kind of boy who escaped outdoors at every opportunity. As I got older, that developed into a passion for painting landscapes. I was never happier than when standing in a field with my easel in front of me."

His academic achievements were limited by dyslexia, and his artistic interpretations filtered by a colour blindness that meant he saw only in tones. "I was an extremely diligent child who never made it far from the bottom of the class, however hard I tried." Anxious to live up to his family's expectations, he nevertheless managed to get a place reading anthropology at the University of Manchester but was soon defeated by the volume of reading the course required.

He decided to go travelling and, on the ski slopes of Courchevel, he met the woman who was to become his wife, and has been his business partner for the past 24 years. Helen was part way through a degree in languages and encouraged James to sign up for 'something creative'. "It was all very random and last minute," he says. "I made a list of ten possible courses. Nine of them were pure design. The tenth was garden design at the University of Greenwich." The four-year course proved to be a turning point. "Up until then, I'd had an innate, artistic understanding of landscape. Suddenly, I started to really understand it, and the plants that made it. I became obsessed." He graduated in 1998 with a First-class honours degree; at the top of his class for the first time in his life.

For the next two years, he and Helen worked in London for New Zealand garden designer Ross Palmer and then, in 2000, received a surprise invitation to design a community garden at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show brokered by Dan Pearson, who had seen the final degree show James presented at Greenwich. Gardens for People won an RHS Silver Gilt medal, but instead of capitalising on the opportunity, he and Helen decided to walk away. "Our dream was to make a home in the south of France. And I knew I needed more time and experience if I was going to be able to make the sort of gardens I really wanted to."

For the next seven years, James and Helen laboured side by side digging holes, deciphering pond-pump instructions and building gardens from the ground up, while raising three young children. With family connections in the affluent expat community in Monaco, finding clients was easy. Trickier was negotiating a compromise between the garden clients asked for, and the style of garden that James felt was appropriate to the climate. "Everyone wanted a lawn with sprinklers, roses, the whole English idyll. It was a constant battle with crushed dreams and sleepless nights."

> EVERYONE WANTED A LAWN, ROSES, THE WHOLE ENGLISH IDYLL. IT WAS A CONSTANT BATTLE WITH CRUSHED DREAMS

Having refined his landscaping skills, honed his plant palette and consolidated his design philosophy, James decided it was time to return to the international show circuit. He worked on Sarah Eberle's Chelsea garden for the Principality of Monaco in 2011, and was back a year later under his own banner to win Silver Gilt with a striking small garden based on a lost valley near Nice. In 2013 James and Helen self-financed a garden called After the Fire and their artistic interpretation of nature regenerating after disaster was a tour de force that attracted the attention of the show judges, who awarded it Gold and Best in Show for its category.

These days James rarely gets asked for a lawn, and his design practice Scape aims to produce fewer gardens, but develop long-term relationships with their owners, so they can be maintained in the best way. He is also working on a computer program to develop successful plant combinations. "My father put the first computer into the London Stock Exchange, and I've been programming since I was a child, so I'm fascinated by the prospect of a program you can set in progress to expand and refine itself."

It's a hi-tech approach that seems a long way from the gentle combination of craft and artistry manifested in his gardens, but James sees no incongruity. "It's just a different approach. People are more environmentally aware than ever, and it is an exciting time for garden designers. We are so lucky to be part of it." ❑

USEFUL INFORMATION

Scape Design, 27 Boulevard des Moulins, 98000 Monaco.
Tel +377 97 97 15 36, scapedesign.com

NEXT MONTH Designers Julian and Isabel Bannerman.

S03

GLADIOLUS

A select palette of modern Gladiolus *hybrids are making their way to the fore as the perfect accent plant for contemporary planting schemes*

WORDS **TOM BROWN** PHOTOGRAPHS **DIANNA JAZWINSKI**
OPENING IMAGE **JONATHAN BUCKLEY**

At Parham House & Gardens in West Sussex, head gardener Tom Brown has trialled more than 80 *Gladiolus* cultivars to establish the best.

54

I'm harbouring no illusions that I have my work cut out, trying to persuade some of you to find room for gladioli in your gardens. For many these plants are forever associated with outrageous taste; the sight of a flamboyant Dame Edna waving them around on our television screens in the 1970s or Morrissey doing much the same thing a decade later are seared in our memories. But fear not, a modern era of gladioli has arrived, thanks to a tremendous amount of hybridisation work, in response to our ever-changing trends and tastes. Gladioli still offer those bright-red and acid-yellow blooms that scream nostalgia, but, as with modern tulip breeding, the darker, subtler and the more compact cultivars are beginning to push their way above the crowd.

Gladiolus takes its name from the Latin word *gladius*, meaning sword like, in reference to the shape of its leaves. In ancient Rome gladiators are said to have worn gladioli corms around their necks when going into battle leading to the plant's association with strength and integrity, although it is also symbolic of infatuation. More than 255 species of gladioli exist in the wild and are most diverse in South Africa where they flower in soils that do not freeze and bloom during the cooler months of the African winter. Here in the UK gladioli are summer-flowering plants mostly used as cut flowers. In recent years they've fallen out of fashion, mainly thanks to those sold in supermarkets and on garage forecourts; like alstromerias, sunflowers and sweet williams, they are plants that have become so inexpensive and plentiful we take them for granted. As an antidote to this, the orchid-like flowers of 'Flevo Cool' and 'Adrienne' are truly sophisticated, associating beautifully with other late-summer performers. In a vase or border, these more compact cultivars enhance a display without dominance.

Of course, if you're looking for loud and proud in your vase then there are also more traditional-looking, ruffled gladioli cultivars such as 'Priscilla', 'Pink Lady' and 'Aftershock'. The challenge when using these in a cutflower arrangement is finding companions that will stand up to them. In this case look no further than dahlias, zinnias and sunflowers to complement your gladioli. *Dahlia* 'Charlie Dimmock' and *D.* 'Sam Hopkins' work incredibly well. Equally, sunflowers such as *Helianthus debilis* 'Vanilla Ice' and *H. annuus* 'Sonja', or the ever reliable Benary's range of zinnias.

Richly coloured gladioli, including 'Violetta' and 'Flevo Flash', alongside their cousin *G. murielae* can be used as accent clumps through an herbaceous border to accentuate colour. Techniques such as repetition and using reliable performers in a planting are much-used tools in a head gardener's armoury. Try using dwarf gladioli in groups of five to ten bulbs at the front and central band of your borders. The rich and opulent 'Aftershock', 'Chocolate' and 'Velvet Eyes' demand attention, providing a pulse of vibrant colour to take us through into the safe hands of the later performing asters and rudbeckias. In contrast, clusters of 'Homecoming' and 'Break of Dawn', with their tranquil tones, can offer a soothing backdrop to sipping a gin and tonic on a balmy summer evening.

Much is talked about the June gap in gardens, that brief lack of flowers after the tulips have died down, before early summer flowering perennials take centre stage. But what about the late August gap? That period when late-season perennials are still gathering momentum but summer favourites are starting to struggle with rising temperatures and dry conditions. Step up gladioli, igniting fireworks in the front, middle and rear of our borders and blowing the lid off our late summer creativity. So my advice is banish all thoughts of brash and gaudy. Instead, experiment and indulge your garden and your vases with bold and beautiful spikes. In short, allow yourself to be seduced afresh by the vintage glamour and the contemporary charms of the gladioli. ❑

• Tom's recommendations for the best gladioli continue over the next five pages.

PLANT PROFILE

What A genus of vibrant and dramatic cormous perennials, best treated as annuals or short-lived perennials. The most widely grown and available are the Grandifloras, comprising of a variety of heights, colours and tones, which make up the bulk of the plants featured here. Also known as sword lily or sword flag.

Origins *Gladiolus* occur all over Africa, Europe and Asia, but the hybrids featured here are mostly of the species found on South African rocky slopes, marshland and seasonally dry grassland.

Season Mid to late summer. You can stagger flowering if planting is periodic from May. Expect flowers between 80 and 100 days after planting.

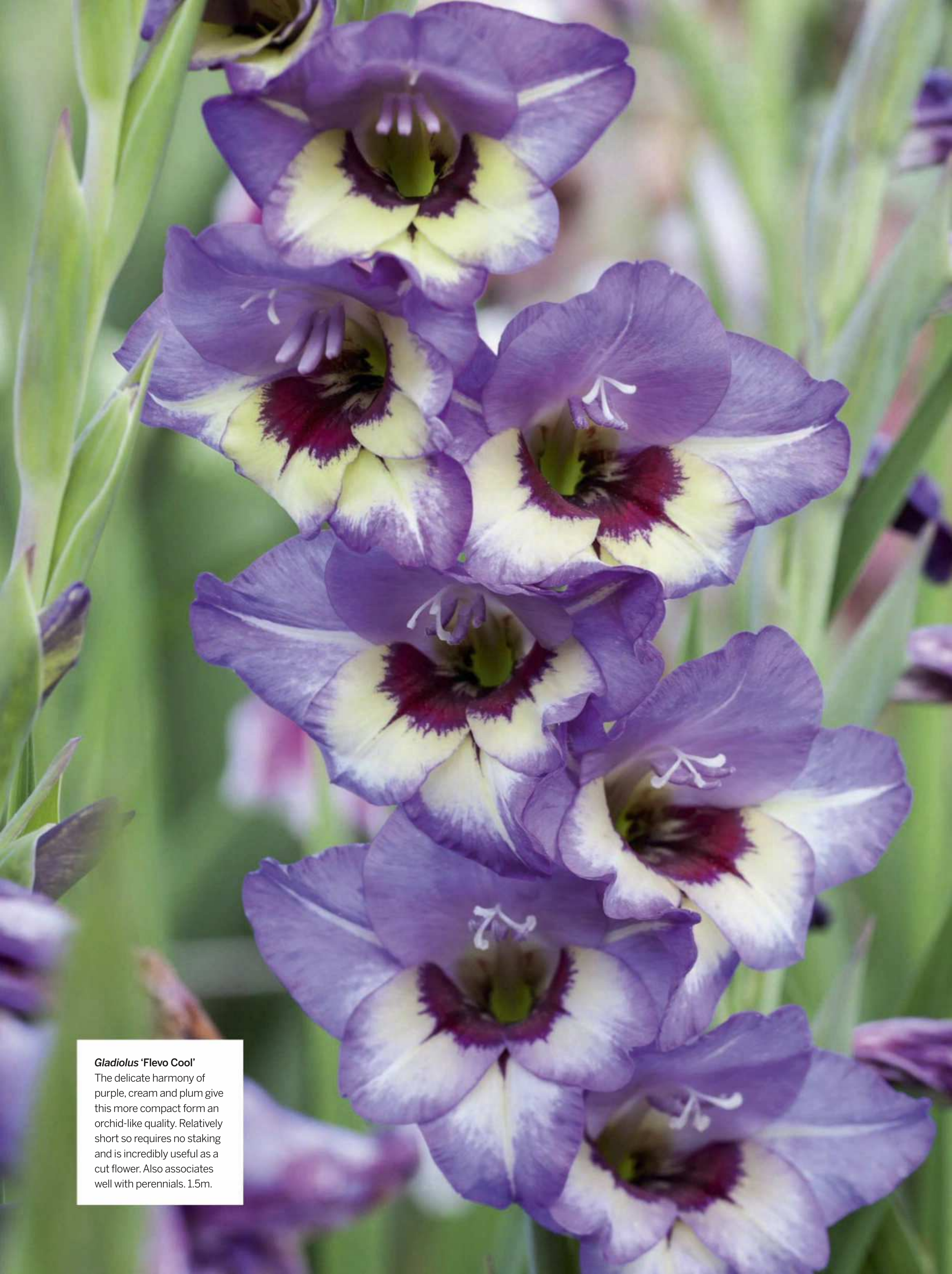
Size Large Grandifloras can reach 2m in height, dwarf cultivars achieve around 1.5m.

Conditions *Gladiolus* rapidly grow over a relatively short time period, therefore reasonably fertile, free-draining soil with a good moisture content in full sun will give you the best results. Corms should be lifted and dried overwinter or, in relatively mild parts of the UK or sheltered areas with free-draining soil, they can be overwinter in situ, provided the soil has been heavily mulched.

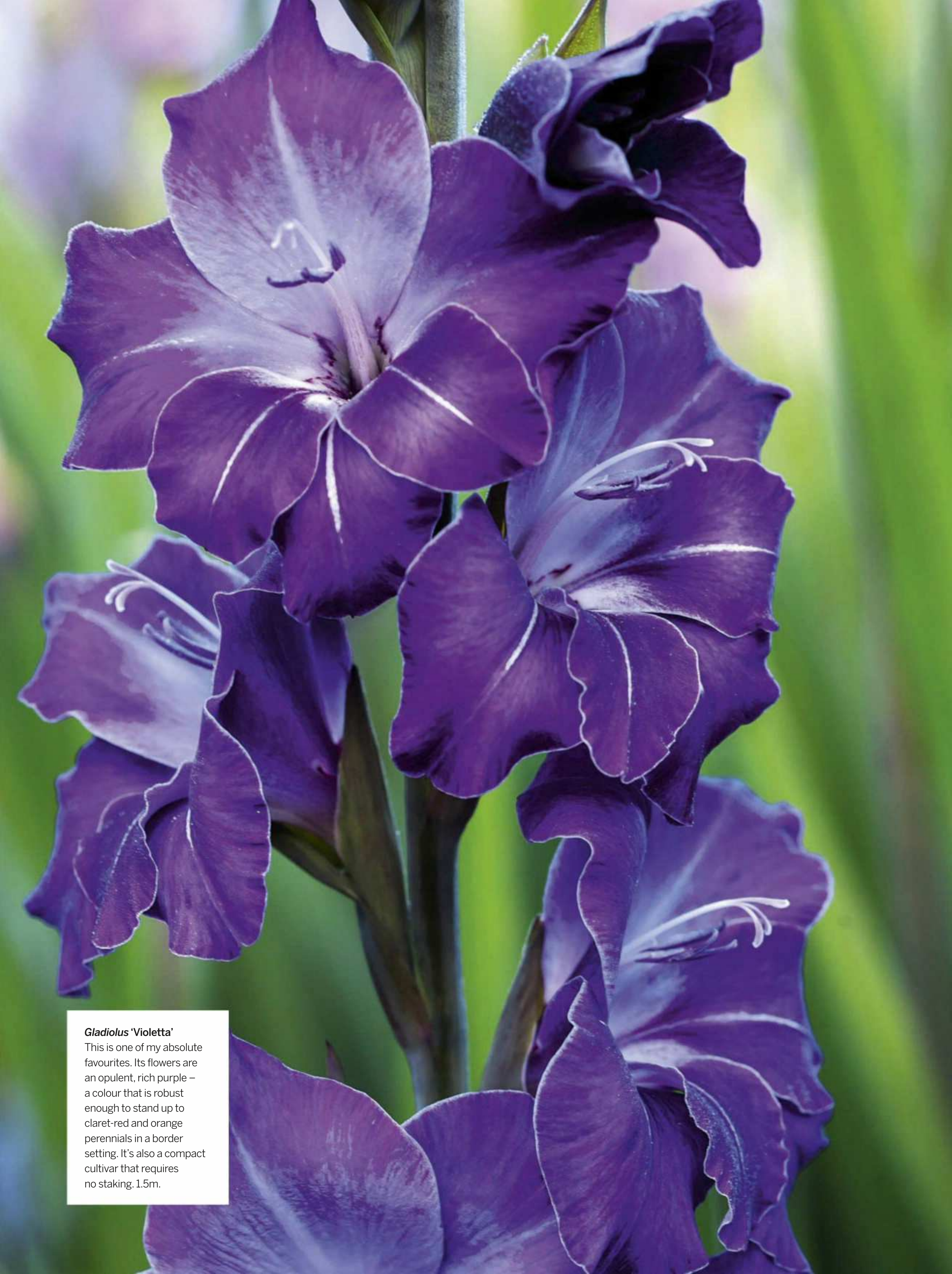
Hardiness *Gladiolus* are half-hardy perennials with have an RHS hardiness rating of H3 (hardy to temperatures of -5 -1°C). Corms may be left in the ground year-round in gardens in USDA zones 7a to 10b, but should be lifted in cooler zones each autumn.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.

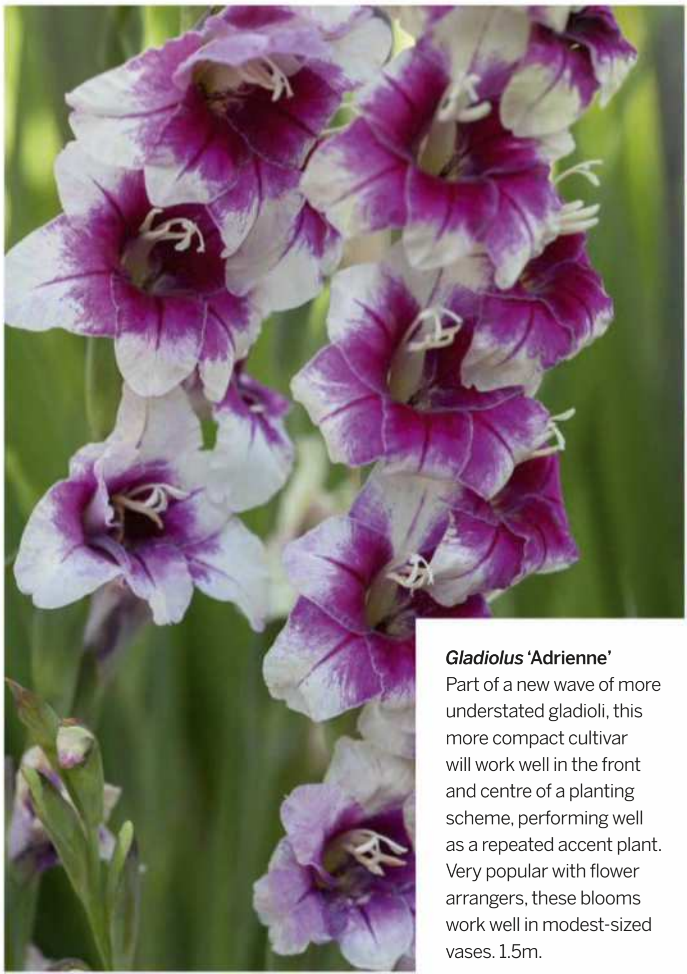
Parham House & Gardens
Most of the images for this month's plant profile were taken at Parham House & Gardens in West Sussex where Tom Brown (above) has been head gardener since 2010. Tom undertook a major trial of *Gladiolus* cultivars at Parham House in 2017. The best from that trial are included among those featured here.
parhaminsussex.co.uk



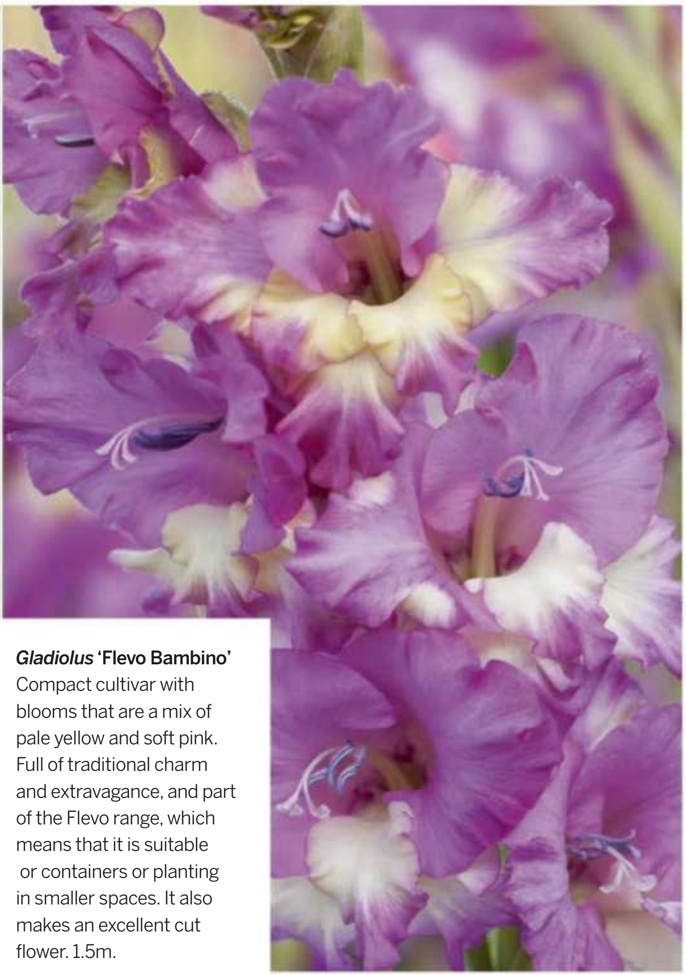
***Gladiolus* 'Flevo Cool'**
The delicate harmony of purple, cream and plum give this more compact form an orchid-like quality. Relatively short so requires no staking and is incredibly useful as a cut flower. Also associates well with perennials. 1.5m.



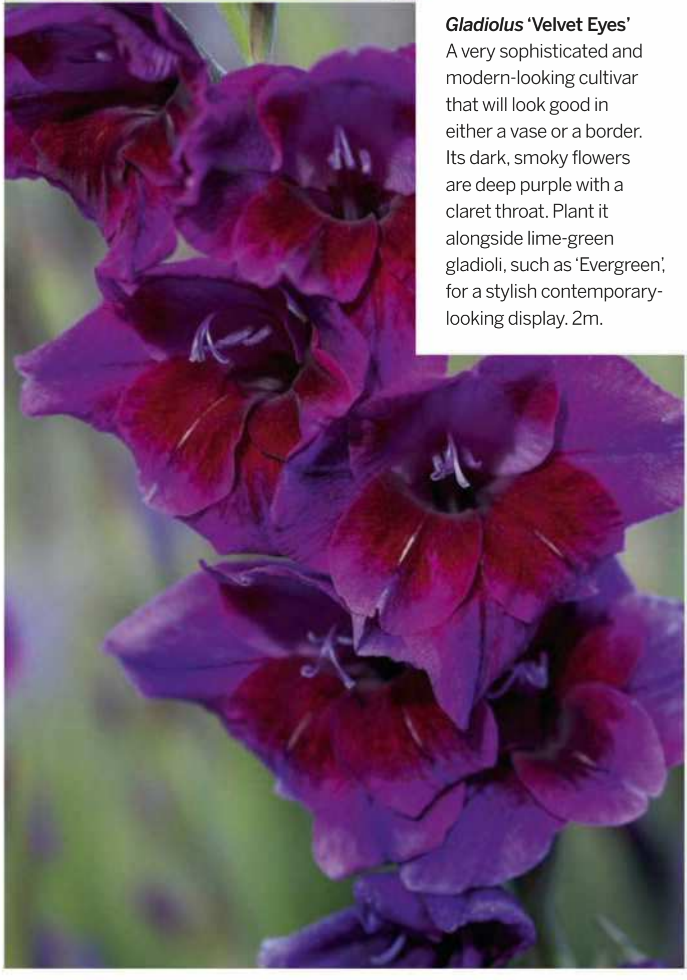
Gladiolus 'Violetta'
This is one of my absolute favourites. Its flowers are an opulent, rich purple – a colour that is robust enough to stand up to claret-red and orange perennials in a border setting. It's also a compact cultivar that requires no staking. 1.5m.



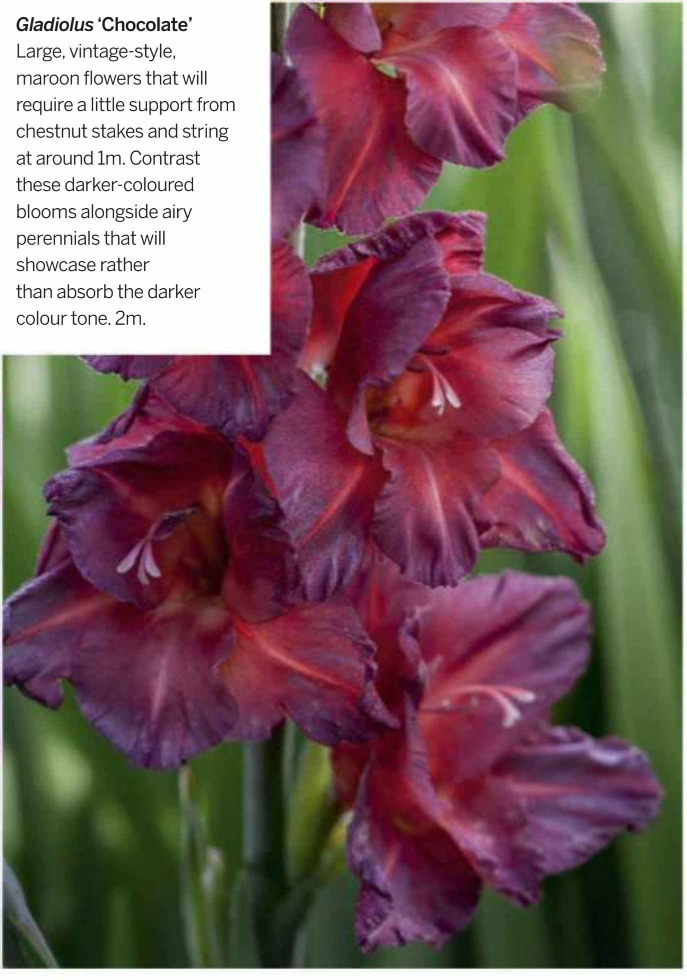
Gladiolus 'Adrienne'
Part of a new wave of more understated gladioli, this more compact cultivar will work well in the front and centre of a planting scheme, performing well as a repeated accent plant. Very popular with flower arrangers, these blooms work well in modest-sized vases. 1.5m.



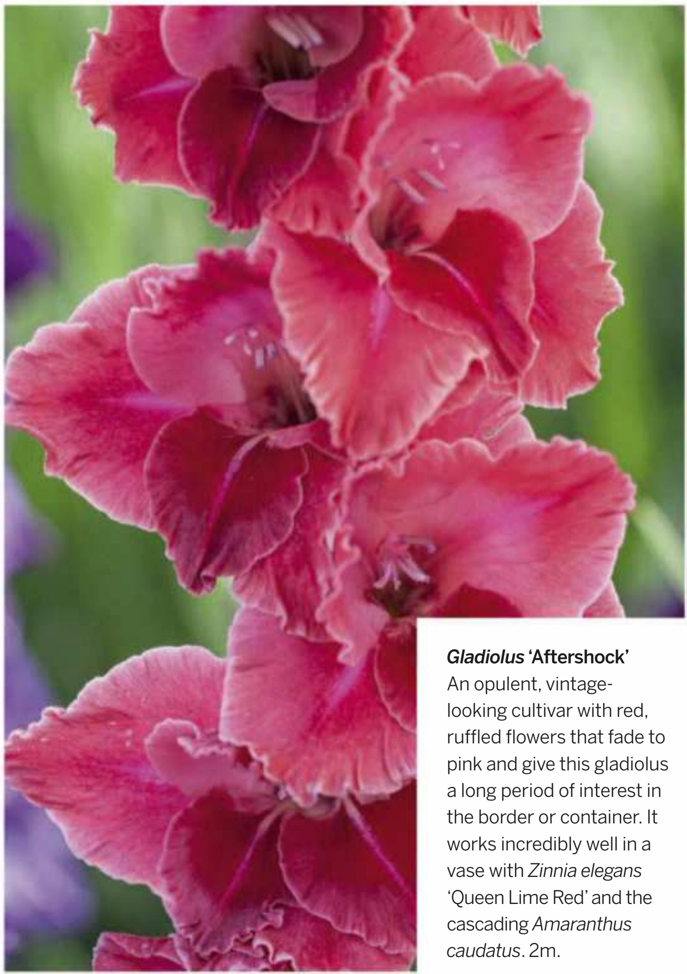
Gladiolus 'Flevo Bambino'
Compact cultivar with blooms that are a mix of pale yellow and soft pink. Full of traditional charm and extravagance, and part of the Flevo range, which means that it is suitable or containers or planting in smaller spaces. It also makes an excellent cut flower. 1.5m.

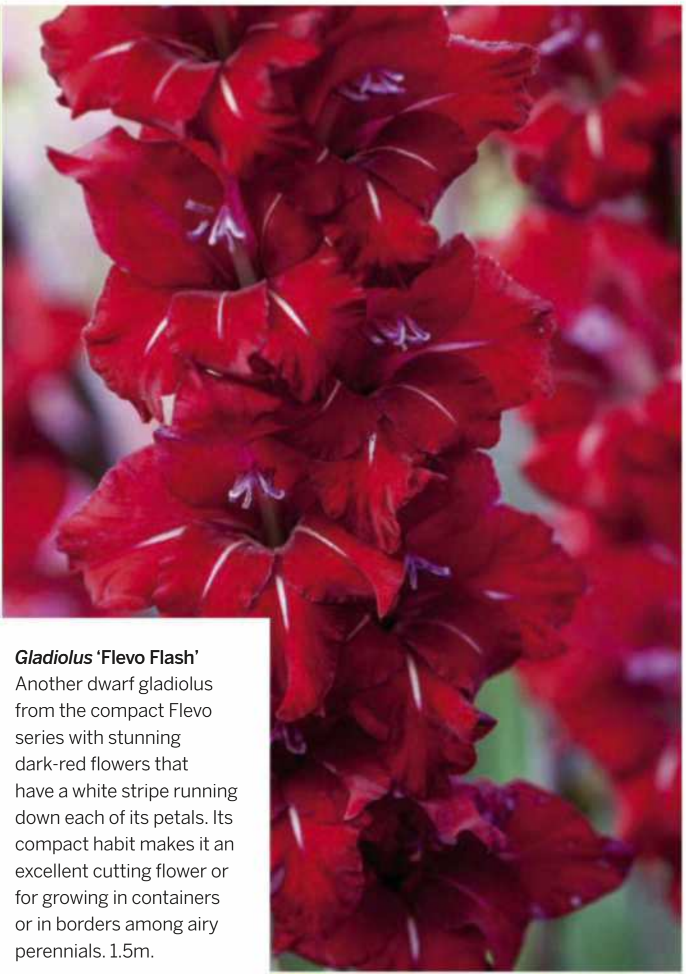


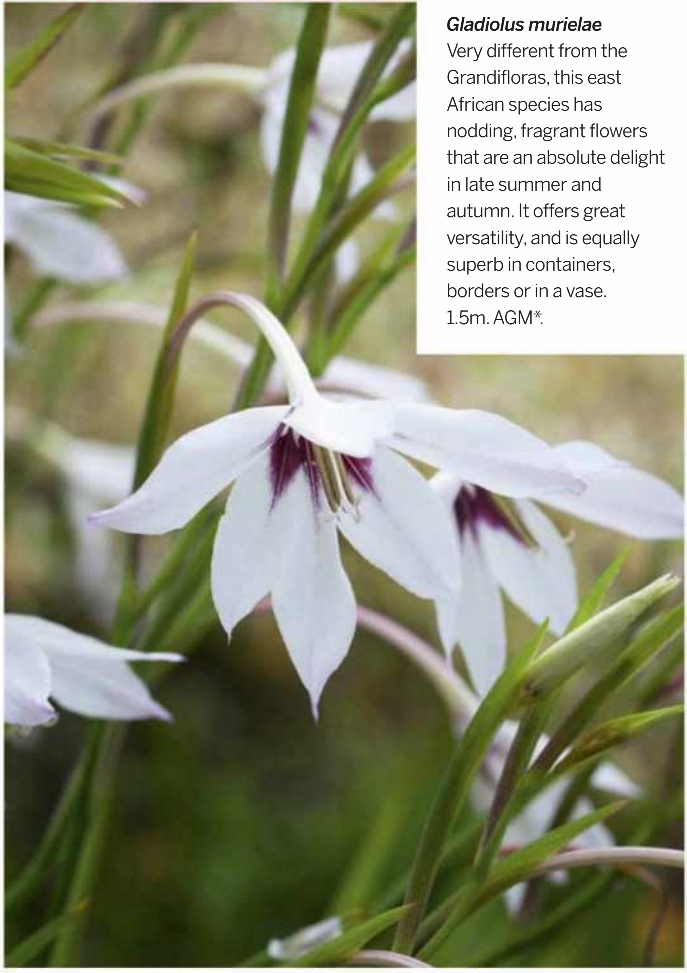
Gladiolus 'Velvet Eyes'
A very sophisticated and modern-looking cultivar that will look good in either a vase or a border. Its dark, smoky flowers are deep purple with a claret throat. Plant it alongside lime-green gladioli, such as 'Evergreen', for a stylish contemporary-looking display. 2m.

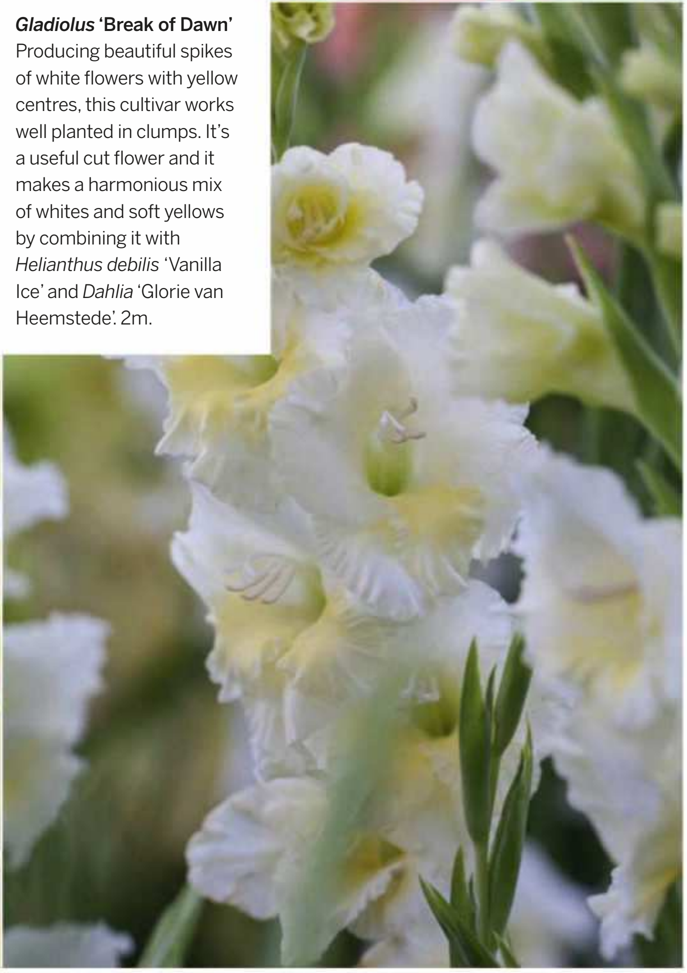


Gladiolus 'Chocolate'
Large, vintage-style, maroon flowers that will require a little support from chestnut stakes and string at around 1m. Contrast these darker-coloured blooms alongside airy perennials that will showcase rather than absorb the darker colour tone. 2m.









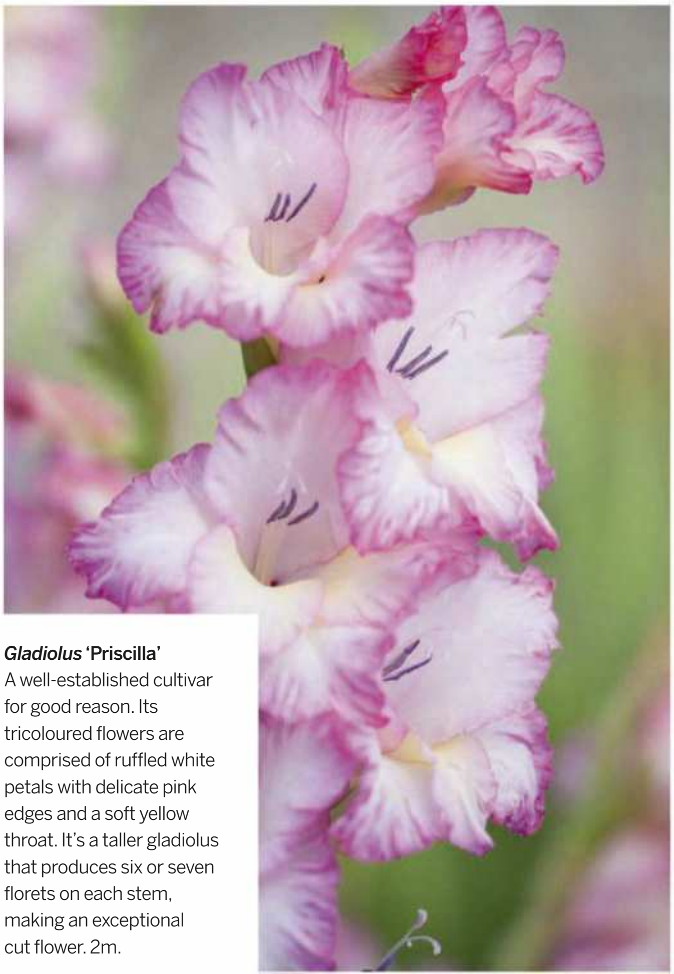
Gladiolus **'Aftershock'**
An opulent, vintage-looking cultivar with red, ruffled flowers that fade to pink and give this gladiolus a long period of interest in the border or container. It works incredibly well in a vase with *Zinnia elegans* 'Queen Lime Red' and the cascading *Amaranthus caudatus*. 2m.

Gladiolus murielae
Very different from the Grandifloras, this east African species has nodding, fragrant flowers that are an absolute delight in late summer and autumn. It offers great versatility, and is equally superb in containers, borders or in a vase. 1.5m. AGM*.

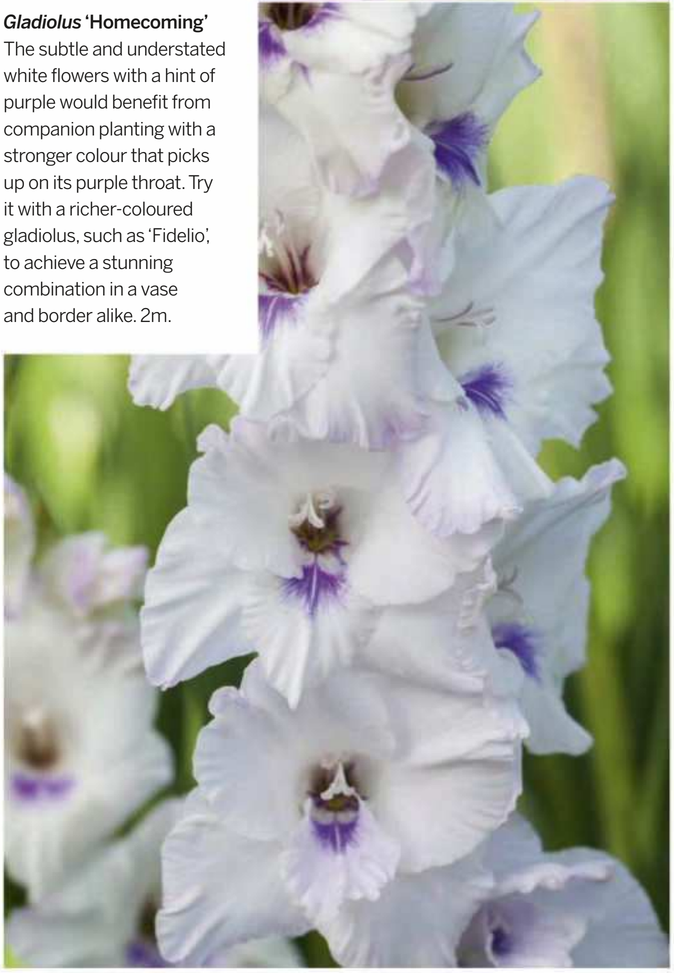
Gladiolus **'Flevo Flash'**
Another dwarf gladiolus from the compact Flevo series with stunning dark-red flowers that have a white stripe running down each of its petals. Its compact habit makes it an excellent cutting flower or for growing in containers or in borders among airy perennials. 1.5m.

Gladiolus **'Break of Dawn'**
Producing beautiful spikes of white flowers with yellow centres, this cultivar works well planted in clumps. It's a useful cut flower and it makes a harmonious mix of whites and soft yellows by combining it with *Helianthus debilis* 'Vanilla Ice' and *Dahlia* 'Glorie van Heemstede'. 2m.

GLADIOLUS MURIELAE: JONATHAN BUCKLEY / GAP PHOTOS



Gladiolus **'Priscilla'**
A well-established cultivar for good reason. Its tricoloured flowers are comprised of ruffled white petals with delicate pink edges and a soft yellow throat. It's a taller gladiolus that produces six or seven florets on each stem, making an exceptional cut flower. 2m.



Gladiolus **'Homecoming'**
The subtle and understated white flowers with a hint of purple would benefit from companion planting with a stronger colour that picks up on its purple throat. Try it with a richer-coloured gladiolus, such as 'Fidelio', to achieve a stunning combination in a vase and border alike. 2m.

Cultivation

Gladioli are relatively easy to grow and as the corms are so inexpensive you can afford to use them as annuals, meaning you can experiment with different colours and styles from one year to the next. They can also be lifted before the first frosts, dried and stored until the following spring or mulched heavily in sheltered, free-draining areas.

There are risks to mulching in situ – corms could be damaged or even killed off in a very harsh winter – so be sure to cut the spikes down in autumn before the first touch of frost. You should also cover the clump with a plastic bin liner to keep the corms dry and mulch liberally with compost. In May, remove the plastic and spread the compost to act as a mulch to feed the emerging plants.

Although many suppliers suggest you can start planting out the corms in March and April, I recommend waiting until at least May when the soil has warmed and the chance of frosts faded. You can expect blooms from around 80 to 100 days after planting. If you are growing your gladioli as annuals for cutting, you should be able to squeeze in around 60 to 100 corms into a square metre, although don't be tempted to plant all the corms at once. You can get a longer display by staggering your planting through May and June at fortnightly intervals.

Gladioli need reasonable soil to perform well but the key to abundant blooms is free-draining and well-prepared soil. Ensure the ground is free of weeds and plant the corms in groups at around 25cm deep. I usually remove a spade's width and depth of soil and then arrange around five to seven corms at the base of the hole. By planting deeper, the corms get consistent moisture and temperature so the flowers need less staking.

Many of the gladioli featured here are the more compact dwarf types, and one of advantages of growing these is that they don't require staking. The larger Grandifloras simply need four stakes in the corners of the clump and then string around the perimeter and a few pieces in between. Alternatively, pea sticks can be used but the main support is required at a metre off the ground.

To keep the spike looking fresh, both in the garden and vase, remove the lower flowers as they fade. When cutting gladioli, it is always best to remove the top bud, which often results in more flowers in the stem opening to their full potential. Stay vigilant for aphids and, if they appear, treat with an organic insecticide or environmentally friendly pesticide, such as SB Plant Invigorator – although gladioli are all reasonably trouble-free. They're also extremely versatile and the sultry colours of the more modern hybrids make them excellent accent plants for airy perennials but can also complement stronger colours. The rich-red of *Gladiolus* 'Flevo Flash', for example, works wonderfully with *Rudbeckia fulgida* var. *sullivantii* 'Goldsturm' and *Hylotelephium* 'Matrona'.

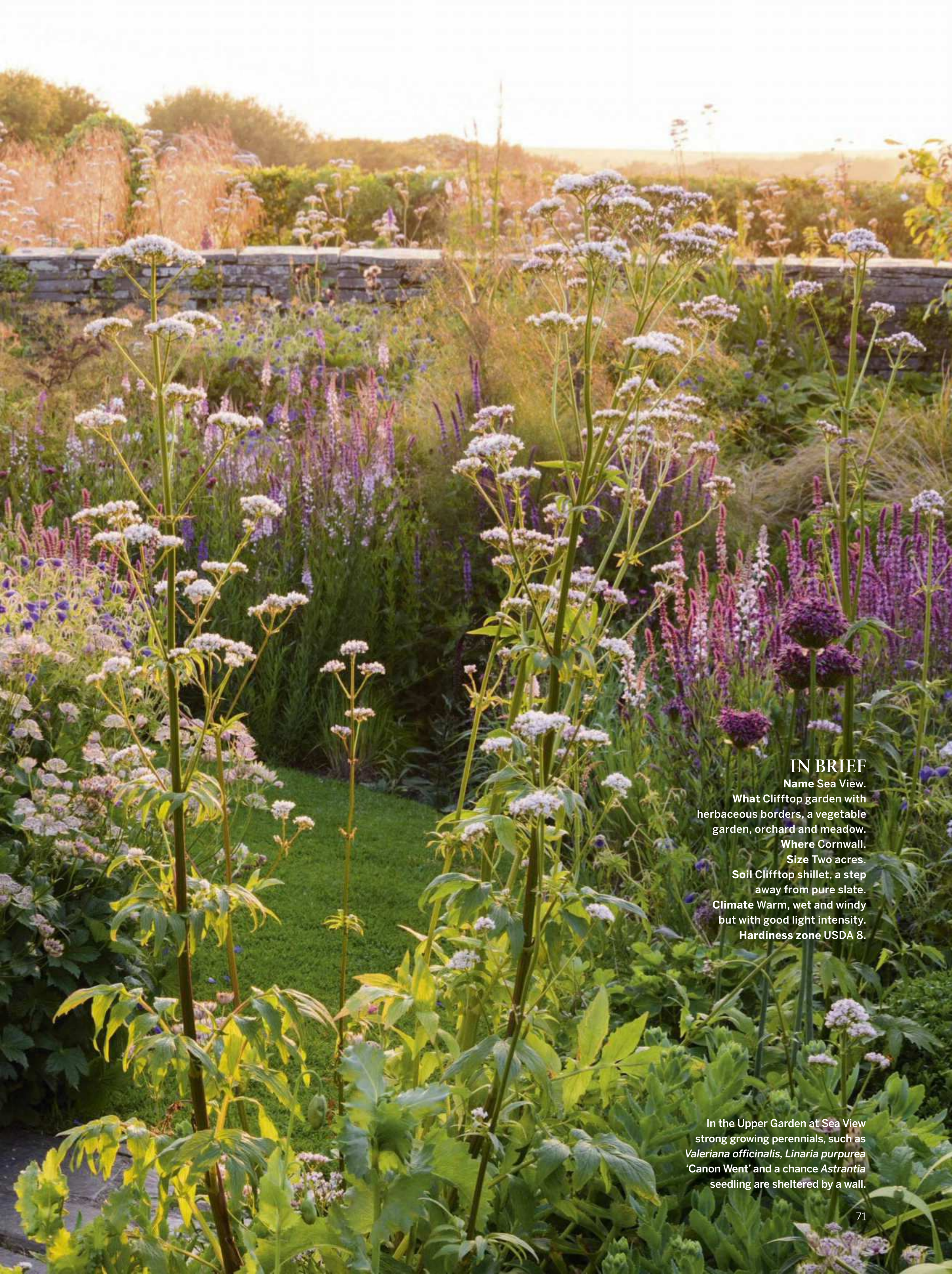
Where to see and buy

- **J Parker Dutch Bulbs**
  14 Hadfield Street,
  Manchester M16 9FG.
  Tel 0161 848 1100
  jparkers.co.uk
- **Kelways Plants Ltd**
  Picts Hill, Langport,
  Somerset TA10 9EZ.
  Tel 01458 250521,
  kelways.co.uk
- **Parham House & Gardens**
  Pulborough, West
  Sussex RH20 4HS.
  Tel 01903 742021,
  parhaminsussex.co.uk
- **P de Jager & Sons**
  Church Farm, Ulcombe,
  Maidstone, Kent ME17 1DN.
  Tel 01622 840229,
  dejager.co.uk
- **Pheasant Acre**
  3 Pheasant Walk, Pen-y-fai,
  Bridgend CF31 4DU.
  Tel 01656 664086
  pheasantacreplants.co.uk
- **Sarah Raven**
  1 Woodstock Court,
  Blenheim Road, Marlborough,
  Wiltshire SN8 4AN. Tel 0345
  092 0283, sarahraven.com

THE LIGHT FANTASTIC

A garden of warmth and intimacy in Cornwall basks in the sun's rays overcoming the limitations of an exposed clifftop position

WORDS **TOM PETHERICK** PHOTOGRAPHS **CAROLE DRAKE**



IN BRIEF

Name Sea View.
What Clifftop garden with herbaceous borders, a vegetable garden, orchard and meadow.
Where Cornwall.
Size Two acres.
Soil Clifftop shillet, a step away from pure slate.
Climate Warm, wet and windy but with good light intensity.
Hardiness zone USDA 8.

In the Upper Garden at Sea View strong growing perennials, such as *Valeriana officinalis, Linaria purpurea* 'Canon Went' and a chance *Astrantia* seedling are sheltered by a wall.

Of all the places to garden in the UK, not many people would choose an isolated hamlet on the edge of north Cornwall's Atlantic coast, open to the sea, the salt and the relentless westerly wind. Duncan Scott and his partner Jeremy McAuliffe have done exactly that and their garden at Treligga on the Cornish coast is a wonderful example of what is possible under extremely testing conditions.

For all its big cliffs, exposed conditions and limiting factors on the northwestern corner of Port Isaac Bay, the site's great advantage is the light that bounces off the sea. It is a major asset in getting plants to grow – and grow big. The plants are also clearly happy in the clifftop shillet soil. The plot at Sea View is not over-gardened, but the result of good husbandry, attention to detail and a natural feel for, and devotion to, the craft.

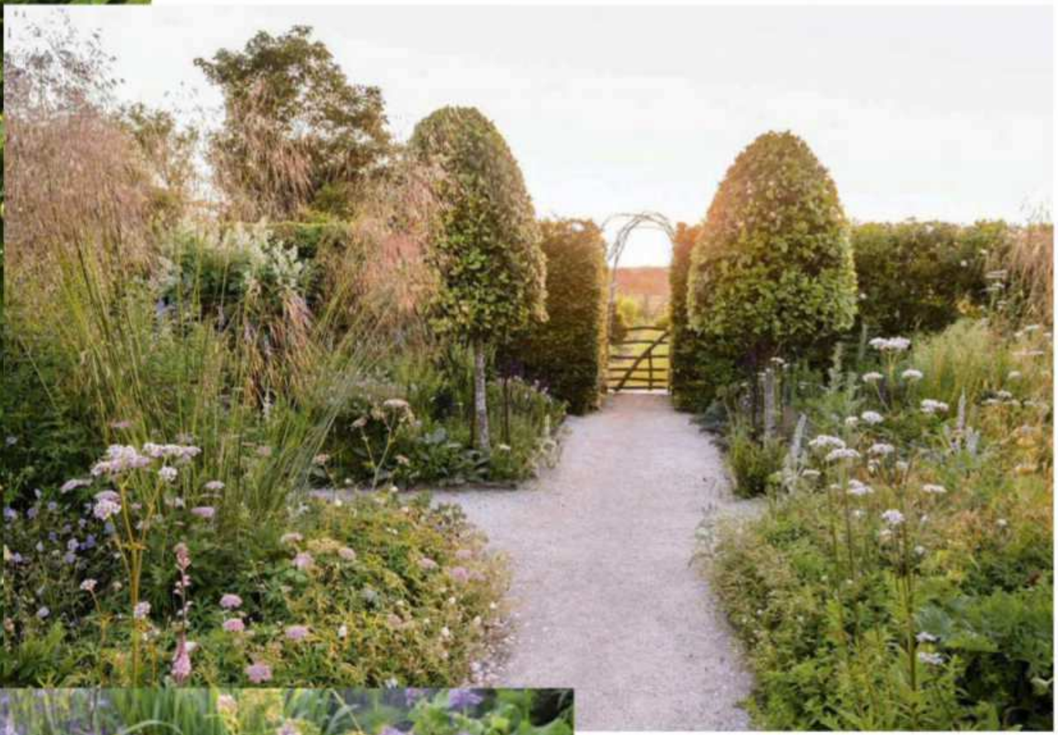
While Sea View has been laid out with a design eye for the view to the sea and the space, Duncan's real joy is the planting. Herbaceous perennials are his passion. A creative man who attended art college at 16, he was influenced by nature from boyhood, recalling the strong impression bluebell woods had upon him as a child. His drive to work with nature is strong and nothing in this garden feels forced. He understands what he has to work with and responds accordingly. "I wanted the garden to fit," he says.

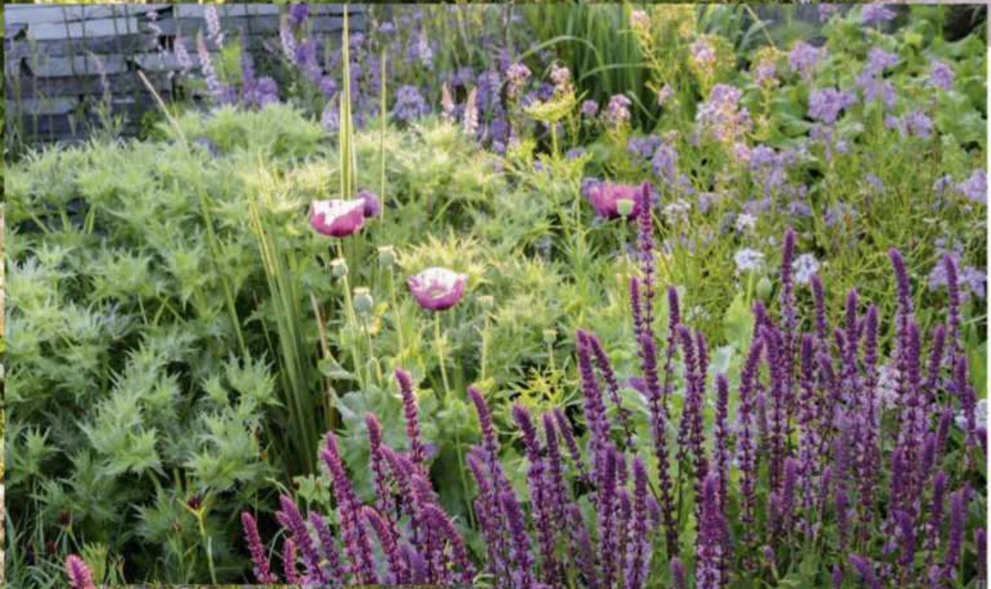
The property comprises a pretty, southwest-facing house and three fields that lead to the clifftop. It is in these couple of acres that Duncan has made his garden, beginning around the house with borders and shelter, spreading through an arch of hornbeam, beautifully woven in an Elizabethan style found in a book from that era, down steps into another garden rich with more borders and from there into a vegetable and cutting garden. Beyond is an open meadow and a mixed orchard of fruit trees. After that there is only a narrow field where cattle graze and then the cliff.

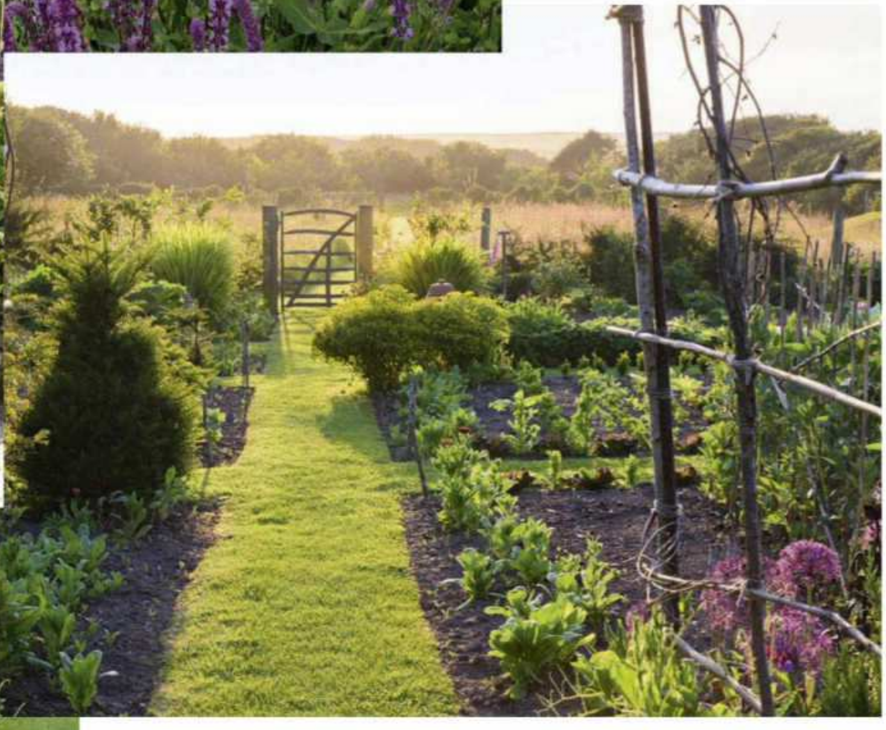
A visit to the Hadspen House garden of Nori and Sandra Pope in the late 1990s brought home to Duncan the concept of *genius loci* – or a sense of place. While he lists other influences as Beth Chatto, Noel Kingsbury and Piet Oudolf, along with his ▷

> THE LIGHT IS A MAJOR ASSET IN GETTING PLANTS TO GROW – AND GROW BIG

Main image The hornbeam espalier is woven in the winter to create a rich feathery effect. Around it *Valeriana pyrenaica* and *Macleaya* x *kewensis* reach up alongside subtly clipped box to fill the space beneath the hedge.







Clockwise from left

***Salvia nemorosa* 'Amethyst'** adds colour to a soft border alongside *Geranium* 'Brookside' and naturalised opium poppies.

A pair of sculpted holm oaks frame the entrance to the vegetable garden. In the foreground a magnificent *Stipa gigantea* is underplanted with low-growing perennials such as *Geranium clarkei* 'Kashmir White' and *Pimpinella major* 'Rosea'.

In the Vegetable Garden herbs, such as *Calendula officinalis*, mix with lettuce, broad beans and sweet peas.

Duncan Scott with Dolly the whippet and Bongo the Bedlington terrier.

AREAS OF THE GARDEN LIGHT UP AT DIFFERENT TIMES OF THE DAY, AND AS THE SEASONS CHANGE

▷ close neighbour Bett Hartley, this garden is definitively his work. The space has an inherent sense of itself, like it is supposed to be there. It is, he says, "a quest for feeling".

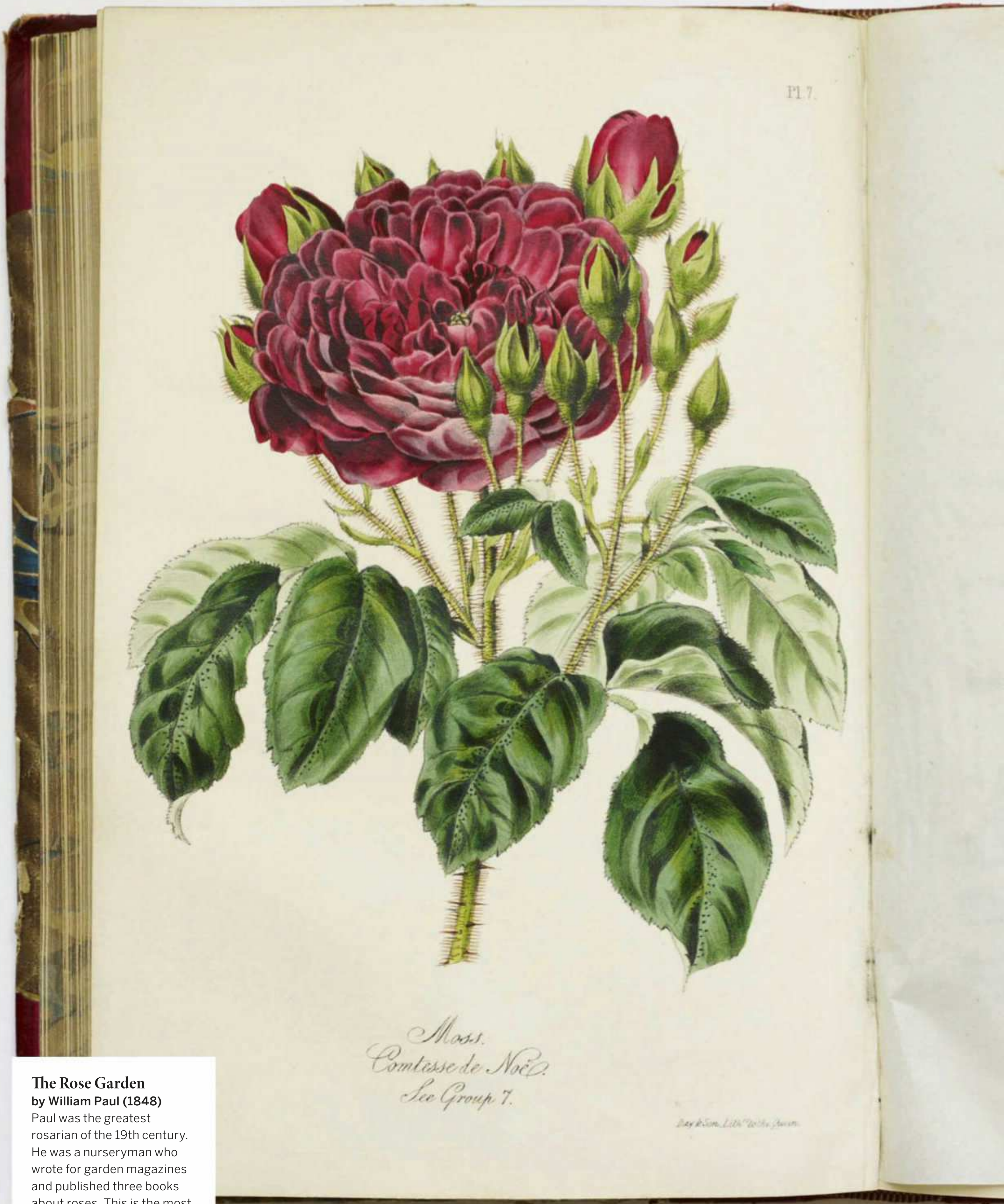
The plants Duncan favours are befitting of clifftop habitat. The grasses are naturals for this landscape – *Stipa gigantea* and *S. arundinacea*, the feathery *Calamagrostis* x *acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster', the self-seeding *Selinum wallichianum* and *Valeriana pyrenaica* and *V. officinalis* are very much 'of the country'. The care of these perennials is made easy by the force of the winter gales that knocks everything flat and allows it to be cleared away. No standing, new perennial winter stems here, except perhaps for the ultra-tolerant sea holly, *Eryngium giganteum* 'Silver Ghost'.

Linaria purpurea 'Canon Went' and the wild carrot *Daucus carota* also give the garden the floaty, ephemeral feel that Duncan seeks. The light changes through the day and as the sun drops into the sea to the west in the evening the last rays give off a silvery sheen through the grasses. This two-acre garden is soft and abundant where it might be coarse and battle-scarred. It is a rare skill to create a comfortable, delicate yet robust garden in such a place. ❏

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Treligga, Delabole, Cornwall PL33 9EE.
Tel 01840 211033.
Open By prior arrangement only from 11 June to 15 July, 2-5pm. Admission £4, for NGS, **ngs.org.uk**

Main image Around a bench in the Upper Garden, *Nepeta racemosa* 'Walker's Low', *Geranium pratense* and *Phlomis russeliana* work in combination with self-seeding *Valeriana* to create an ephemeral feel to the garden.


Pl 7.
Moss.
Comtesse de Noé.
See Group 7.
Day & Son, Lithrs to the Queen

The Rose Garden
by William Paul (1848)
Paul was the greatest rosarian of the 19th century. He was a nurseryman who wrote for garden magazines and published three books about roses. This is the most comprehensive and well-known of the three.

COMING UP ROSES

Almost every inch of space in rosarian Elizabeth Perks's Somerset home is filled with rose-related memorabilia – and that's on top of her collection of more than 550 rose-related books

WORDS **ALYS HURN** PHOTOGRAPHS **JASON INGRAM**

The day I visit Dr Elizabeth Perks and her Rosarian Library in Somerset is a wet one. As I pull up the drive, I spot her at the window. The outline of her frame blurred by the rain. Inside, she guides me to take a seat in the living room. The fire is lit and the warm glow picks up lines of gilded book spines and ornate frames. As she makes tea, I take in the room. There are roses everywhere.

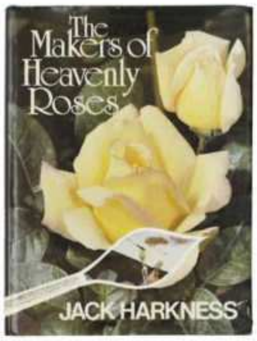
This is her winter rose garden. A collection of books, paintings, fabrics, ceramics and other rose memorabilia lovingly displayed throughout her house. The books started it all and Dr Perks has around 550 individual titles in total. She collects books dedicated solely to the rose and has scoured various rose bibliographies and catalogues from The British Library and RHS Lindley Library to hunt them down. She has now compiled a list of over 1,000 book titles and intends to acquire them all.

Her love of rose books, stems from a love of growing roses. A passion she inherited from her father who loved to grow red roses. She has one of his favourites, *Rosa* Papa Meilland (= 'Meisar') a deep-red, velvety hybrid tea rose, growing in her garden. Elizabeth once grew over 400 roses when she lived in France, selling home-grown flowers and other rosy items from her small business Toujours les Roses. Now, with limited outdoor space, she has turned her attention to collecting books about roses, rather than the flowers themselves. "I had an epiphany and thought I wouldn't mind a few more rose books and so I got hooked, seeing how many I could find." Many of her books were bought from the Royal National Rose Society. Others she picked up at second-hand book shops and internet sites.

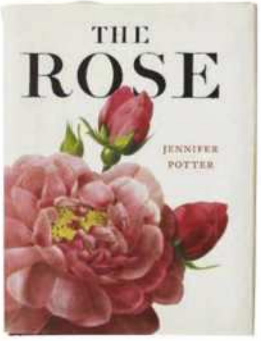
Reading these books has led Elizabeth to go into researching rose literature full time and her favourites are those written in the 19th century. "It was a time when a lot of things came together that made it important that people wrote about roses." She explains how imports from China, hybridised with European roses, gave a greater range of colours and an extended flowering time, and the people who had benefited from the agricultural and industrial revolution could buy homes with gardens and became interested in growing roses. This created a prime business opportunity and two great rosarian's of the time, Thomas Rivers and William Paul, started to sell hybridised roses they had grown themselves.

Rosarians past and present are a source of huge inspiration for Elizabeth who admires the work that went into producing their books. "Some of these rosarians were out in the fields doing their

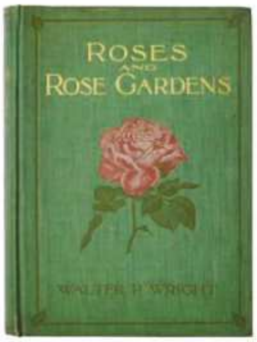
12 OF ELIZABETH'S FAVOURITE ROSE BOOKS



The Makers of Heavenly Roses
by Jack Harkness (1985)
Interesting biographies of many of the great rosarians of recent years. I found this book so readable; Jack Harkness brought the amazing characters to life for me.



The Rose
by Jennifer Potter (2010)
My book for the desert island. An extremely comprehensive book about roses covering everything other than rose cultivation – art, literature, history, medicine, fragrance – it has it all in tremendous detail.



Roses and Rose Gardens
by Walter P Wright (1911)
A comprehensive book about roses and rose growing. I particularly like this book and have included it here because of the beautiful prints of paintings by Beatrice Parsons that have been glued inside.

Methuen Handbook of Roses by Eigel Kaier (1965)
Wide ranging in its information, including cultivation, history, art, rose gardens. It may not have the depth of information of some books but it does have the most amazing illustrations by Verner Hancke.

The Complete Book of Roses by Gerd Krussman (1981) This detailed and erudite book by the German author Gerd Krussman was recommended to me by the Royal National Rose Society and has proved invaluable when researching many aspects of rose growing.

Above left to right

Rose trinkets fill Elizabeth's shelves – although when younger she hated them.

Elizabeth with a fraction of her rose book collection.

Many paintings of roses line the walls of Elizabeth's home.

▷ rose propagation and then they came in and wrote their books by hand. I think they were amazing," she says. "Now we just type, we can delete and print off."

Elizabeth has become well known in the rose world and is often asked to assist in other people's research, most recently to find information on the roses Agatha Christie wrote about in her Miss Marple novels. She has also been approached by the National Trust which has asked her to look into Maud Messel and her involvement in the rose garden at Nymans' in West Sussex. "I love when someone asks me to do an interesting piece of research."

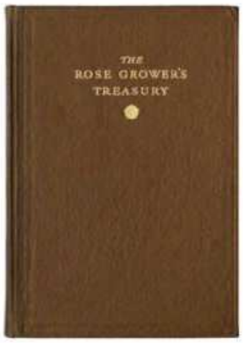
The history of the rose and rose stories captivate Elizabeth more than books on rose cultivation. When I ask her to choose her 12 favourite books, I press her, to narrow it down to just one. "*Immortal Roses* by Jean Gordon," she replies. "I love it because I didn't realise anything like it had been printed. It's just a lot of little rosy stories and one of the stories is about her rose museum." As we go through some of the other books in her library, Elizabeth comments on the beauty of the covers, the handwriting and the delicate spines and wax slips that cover the botanical illustrations within the pages. She appreciates every little detail and it's clear the research and her collection has become her reason to be.

It seems eccentric, but there is a strong sense of purpose in what Elizabeth does. "It's such an interesting subject and I feel it needs to be documented," she explains. "To me it's part of our social history and our heritage."

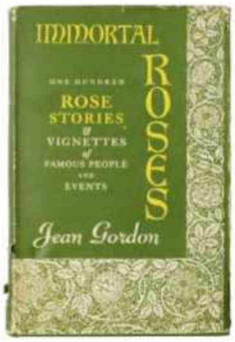
I venture back out into the grey light of the day, wishing that instead of a long drive home I could spend the rest of the afternoon next to Elizabeth's fire with my nose in a book. ❐

USEFUL INFORMATION

Visits to Elizabeth's Rosarian Library are by appointment only, but you can find information on many aspects of rose research through her website **therosarianlibrary.co.uk**

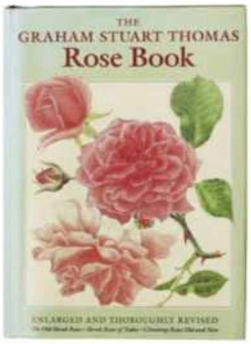


The Rose Grower's Treasury by AJ Macself **(1934)** A book that covers rose cultivation in a concise and clear manner and includes a Register of Roses. Ideal for the amateur rose grower, it was written by the then editor of *Amateur Gardening*.



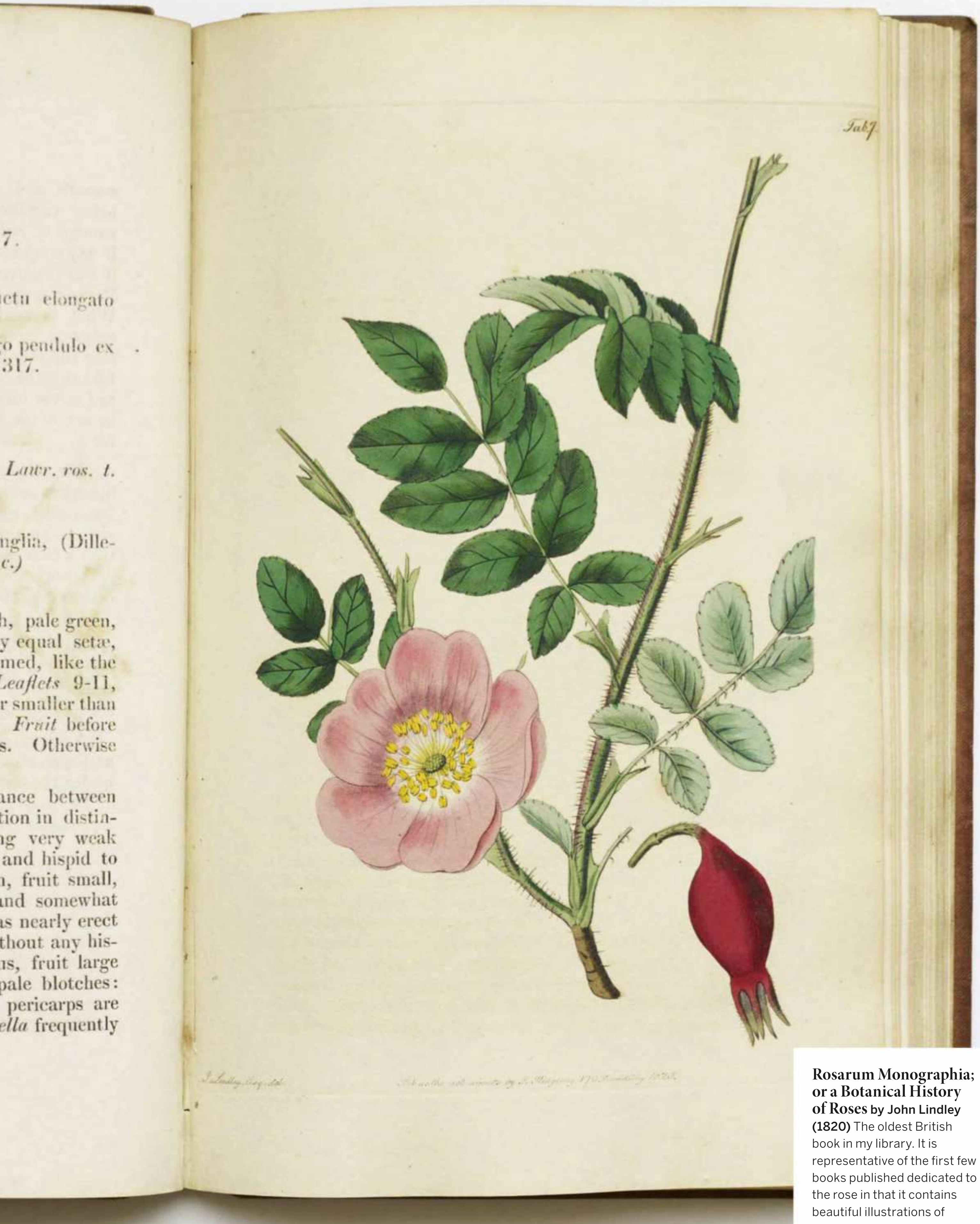
Immortal Roses by Jean Gordon **(1959)** A compilation of small but significant stories about people and roses. I particularly like the vignette about her Rose Museum in Florida, which made me realise I was potentially harbouring a museum.

Rose Books by KL Stock **(1984)** I can't thank the author enough for this extremely useful resource; I have consulted it many times. It is one of only two bibliographies of rose books I have found, and I have included it here as it's the most useful.



The Graham Stuart Thomas Rose Book by Graham Stuart Thomas **(1994)** A serious and thorough documentation of rose varieties and their history. Many beautiful illustrations by Thomas himself. An essential book for the true enthusiast.

A Book about Roses by Samuel Reynolds Hole **(1869)** Hole wrote several books, only one of which was about roses. This book underwent 26 impressions between 1864 and 1910. The style is genial and intellectual with many anecdotes that will appeal to rose growers.



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Rosarum Monographia; or a Botanical History of Roses by John Lindley (1820) The oldest British book in my library. It is representative of the first few books published dedicated to the rose in that it contains beautiful illustrations of roses and their descriptions.

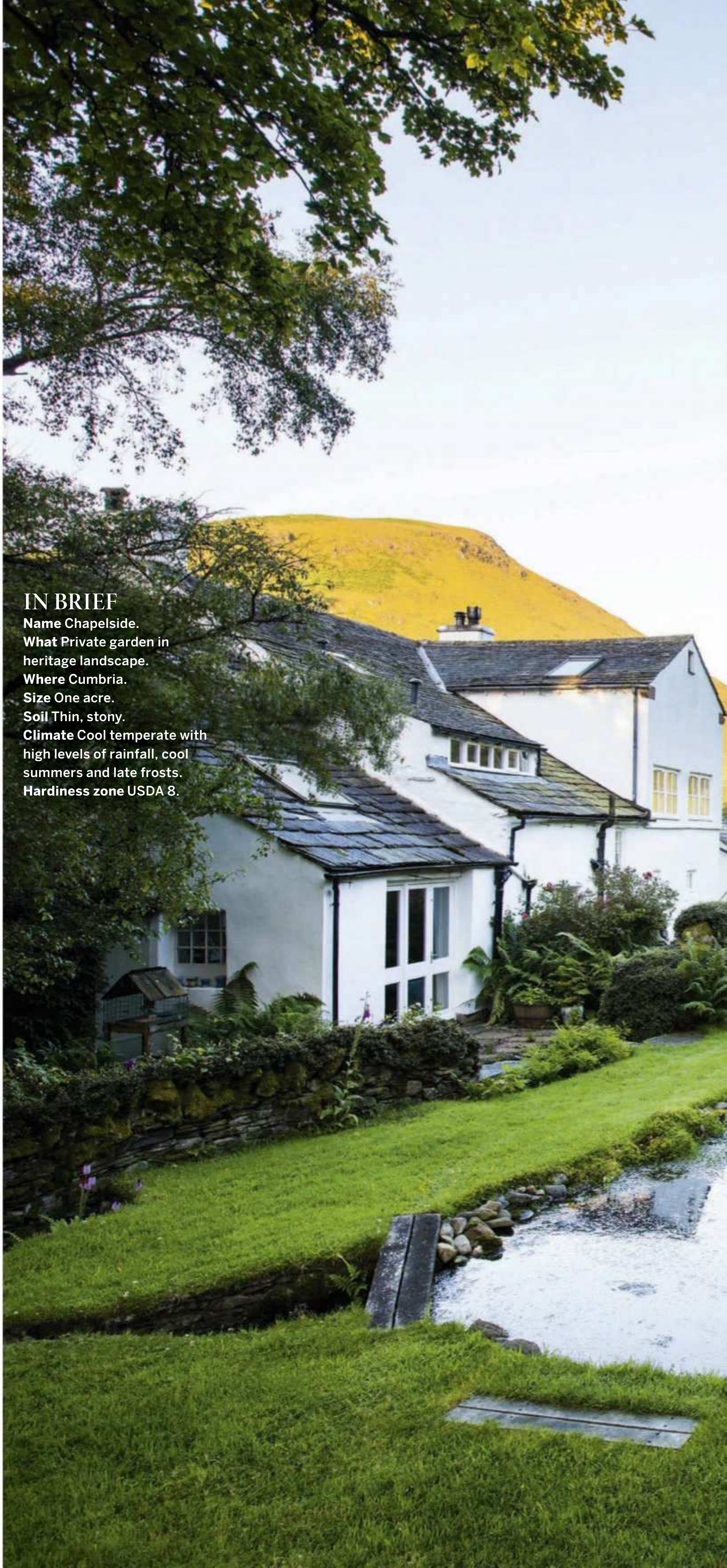
There really is only one word to describe the iew from Chapelside and that's spectacular. The bare hills of the English Lake District are the garden's constant backdrop. But as is so often the case, with great views comes strong winds. "We live with the wind," says owner Tricia Acland. She and her husband Robin moved here 40 years ago largely because of the view of the surrounding landscape and they didn't want to shut it off with planting. So while some garden owners might have been tempted to create windbreaks, Tricia and Robin decided to leave Chapelside open to the elements. "It's very important to us that we sit gently in our landscape and to keep the view and the simplicity of grass and trees behind the house," says Tricia.

Stone is an important element here. Drystone walls are a key part of Cumbria's farming landscape, and such walls run through the property, which was a working farm until just before the Aclands came here. Robin has laid down areas of cobbles, made pathways of slate slabs, edged ponds and built steps, always using found materials and never bringing anything in. Plants tumble over low retaining walls, there are too-big-to-move boulders in some of the borders and stone slab paths are artfully repaired with tightly packed smaller stones. Paths of broken slate and areas of gravel reinforce the message that gardens are made only where the landscape allows it.

Soon after moving here, the couple made a start on the garden's basic layout and planted out several trees, not as a windbreak to but to frame the views. "The best views in the garden always lead out," says Tricia. Close to the house a pond reflects the sky and the hills. At one point by the water's edge hair moss, *Polytrichum commune*, has grown up to form a great billowing mound of soft green, a sight which would be impossible anywhere drier or warmer.

At an elevation of 200m, summers are cool, which can limit the flowering times of some perennials and annuals but there are advantages. Although the climate ▷

To continue turn to page 84.



IN BRIEF

Name Chapelside.
What Private garden in heritage landscape.
Where Cumbria.
Size One acre.
Soil Thin, stony.
Climate Cool temperate with high levels of rainfall, cool summers and late frosts.
Hardiness zone USDA 8.

Right Tricia and Robin were drawn to the garden by its magnificent views of the surrounding hills. A pond behind the house, made by damming a small stream creates a centrepiece for the garden, and reflects the view beyond. Self-sown wild ferns (mostly male fern, *Dryopteris filix-mas*) and foxgloves grow along the wall base.

SITTING GENTLY

In the garden of their Lake District cottage, Tricia and Robin Acland have worked hard not to compete with the spectacular views

WORDS NOEL KINGSBURY PHOTOGRAPHS CLAIRE TAKACS

GARDENING GENTLY

Dense planting and allowing plants to self-seed help keep the garden in harmony with its surroundings

"I grow things closely together and it helps reduce weeding," says Tricia. "And just seeing something put itself somewhere gives me pleasure, especially if it fits in with one of my careful colour groupings."

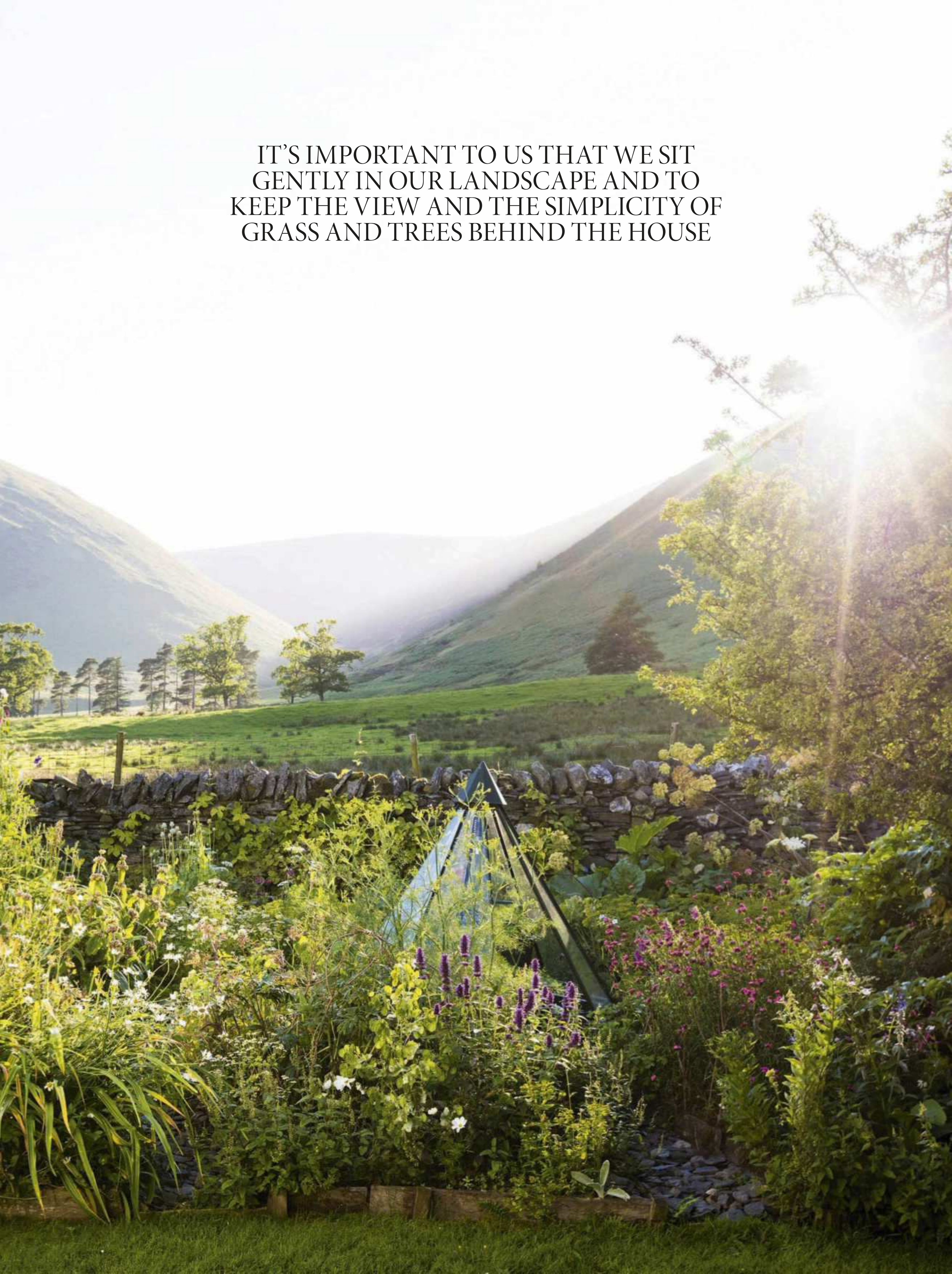
To create the dense naturalistic canopy of vegetation the couple like, they allow the plants themselves to fill in the gaps through self-seeding, and actively encouraging plants, such as the sedge *Carex pendula* (which may be too vigorously self-seeding for many gardens). They also encouraged *Linaria purpurea* to seed into the walls along with male ferns, which have also have seeded themselves into gaps in the paving.

Gravel, which is used at Chapelside, can be an especially good environment for self-seeding, with many species able to germinate and survive in gravel that would not do so in the border. Gravel is a good foreground for plants, especially for those with low foliage that doesn't sprawl too far over it, such as the large-leaved *Phlomis russeliana* used by Tricia and Robin.

Primula species are particularly good self-seeders. Primroses, cowslips and oxlips will seed in most gardens. In the weak grass beneath trees, they often seed and grow particularly vigorously, which if left unmown creates a colourful flower-rich lawn in spring, but which can then be cut conventionally from June onwards. On moist soils, the more exotic Himalayan primulas will seed too, and one of the best at Chapelside is *Primula florindae,* which has seeded into the pavement. This robust and wonderfully scented species is an exceptionally good self-seeder in moist and cool summer climates.

Right One of Tricia and Robin's densely planted border includes a mix of perennials, including the purple *Agastache rugosa* in front of a pyramidal cloche used to protect young plants in spring, cultivars of *Hemerocallis*, the pink *Dianthus carthusianorum* and the fluffy pink *Filipendula rubra,* which has grown exceptionally tall, alongside annuals, such as sweet peas.

IT'S IMPORTANT TO US THAT WE SIT GENTLY IN OUR LANDSCAPE AND TO KEEP THE VIEW AND THE SIMPLICITY OF GRASS AND TREES BEHIND THE HOUSE



▷ is cool and windy, it is not really cold, so tender *Argyrocytisus battandieri*, grows happily sheltered by the house. As might be expected in such a hilly landscape the soil is thin. “We can’t use a spade,” says Robin. “Everything has to be done with a fork, or even a pickaxe.”

Thin soil is partly compensated for by the rain, which encourages good growth of perennials but also the moss, with which Tricia and Robin clearly have a complicated relationship. The hair moss may be beautiful, but Robin complains about how hard it is to keep moss from growing over all the stonework.

High rainfall and humidity encourages native ferns to seed and spread but also moss and wildflowers in the lawn. “We’re organic, so not tempted to do much to the lawns,” says Tricia, before explaining that much of the green at ground level is not grass but other species, such as bugle, *Ajuga reptans*. “Robin has started to mow around it while it is flowering,” she says. “And then there is the little blue-flowered *Pratia pedunculata*, which has moved away from being an edging plant, to be a colourful part of the lawn.”

Pragmatic acceptance of wildflowers, engagingly spreading plants and lush moss are all part of an approach to garden making that is about being truly part of an exceptional landscape. ☐

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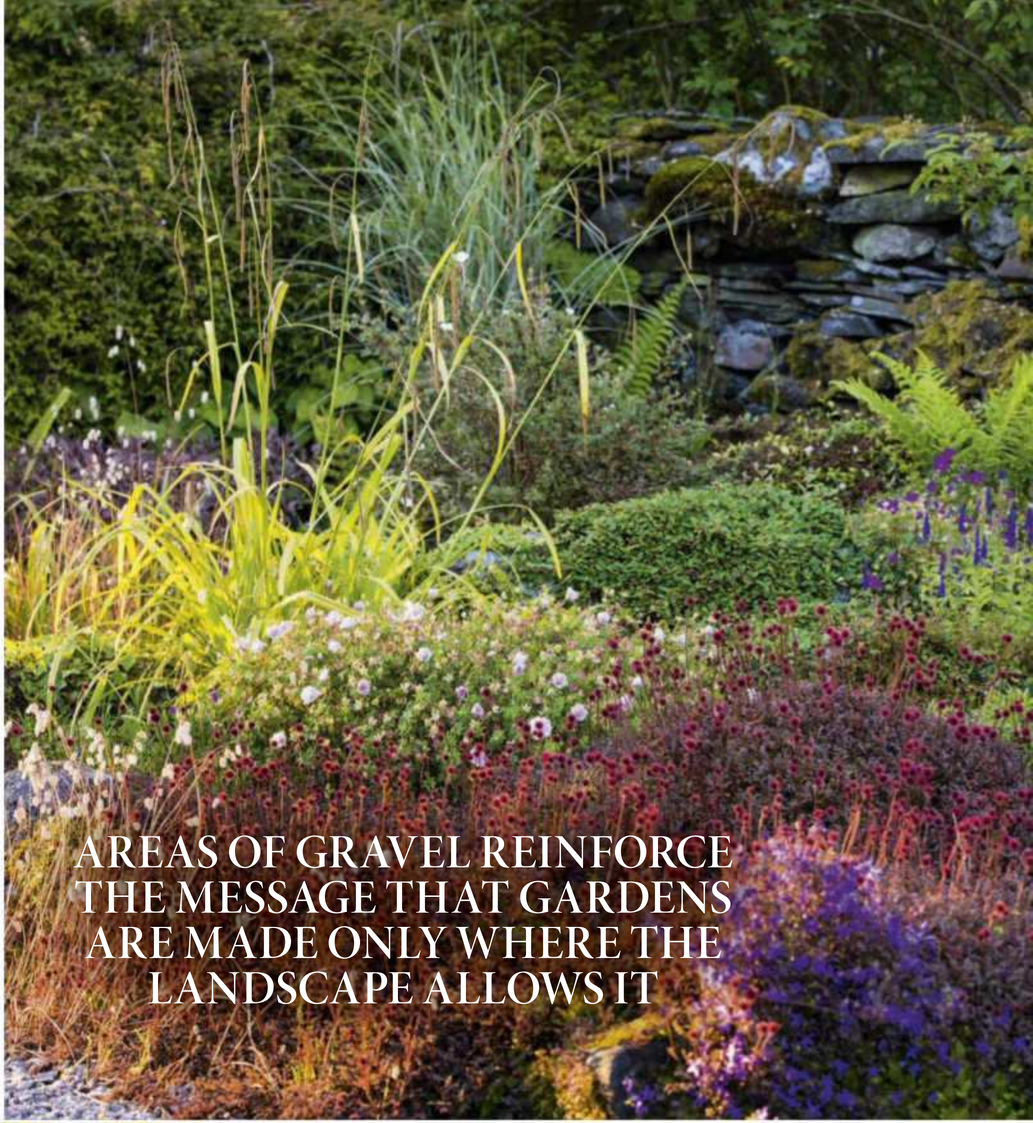
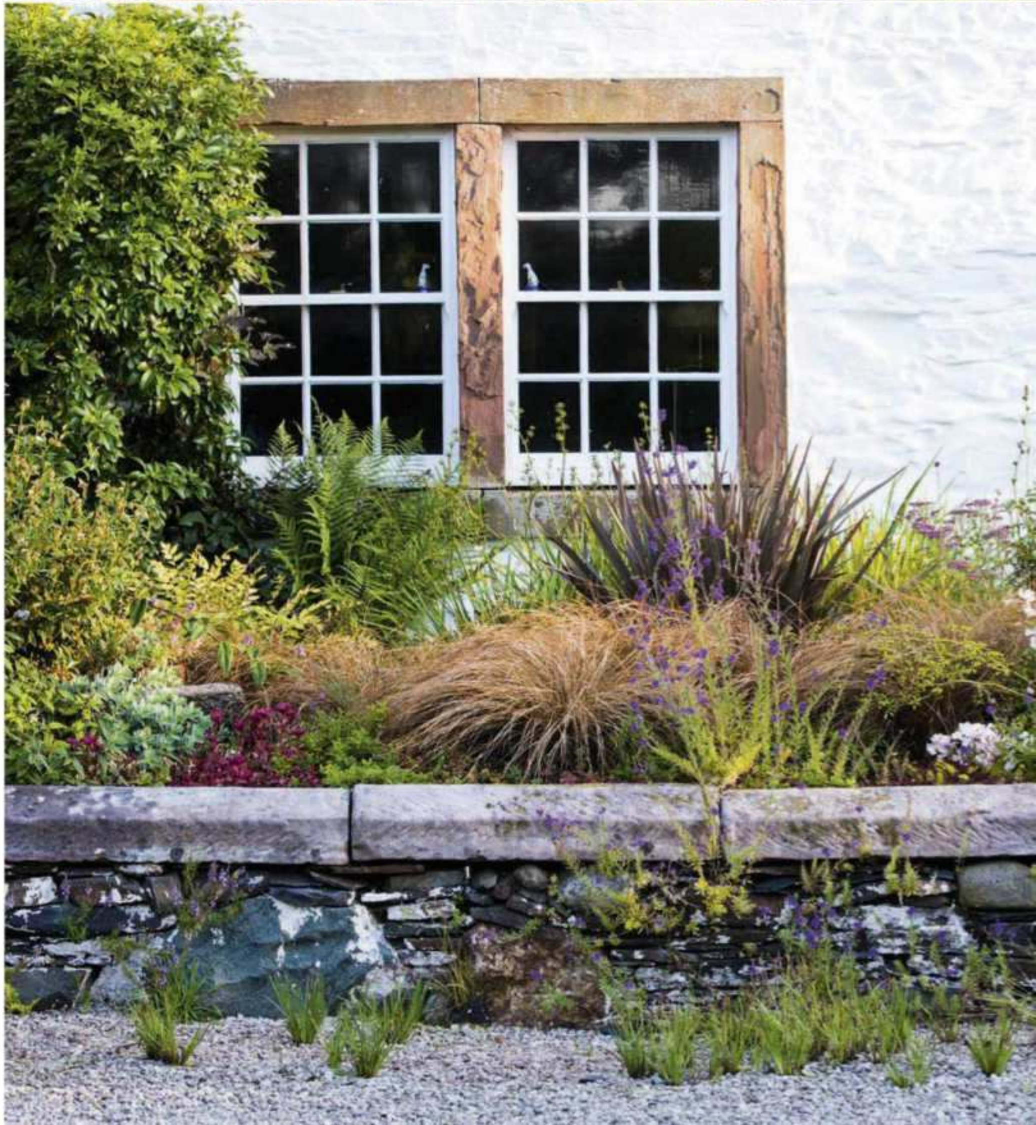
Turn the page for 24 of Chapelside’s key plants



AREAS OF GRAVEL REINFORCE THE MESSAGE THAT GARDENS ARE MADE ONLY WHERE THE LANDSCAPE ALLOWS IT



Clockwise from top left

The architectural sedge *Carex pendula* towers above a bed of lower-growing perennials including pale-pink *Geranium sanguineum* var. *striatum*, the seedheads of *Acaena inermis* ‘Purpurea’ and blue *Campanula porscharskyana*.

A bench is partly hidded by the tall grass *Calamagrostis* x *acutiflora* ‘Karl Foerster’, which is echoed by clumps of *Miscanthus sinensis* ‘Gracillimus’ seen behind the red spikes of *Persicaria amplexicaulis*, to the right of the *Calamagrostis*.

An old specimen of *Juniperus* x *pfitzeriana* has been supported by posts, with hostas growing in the lighter shade of its outer canopy.

The brown foliage of *Carex buchananii* combines well the purple sedge *Phormium tenax* Purpureum Group, one of the few exotic-looking plants in the garden. It’s flanked by red *Hylotelephium* ‘Ruby Glow’ and groundcover *Rosa* Grouse (= ‘Korimro’).

24 of Tricia and Robin's key plants at Chapelside

1 *Astrantia major* Gill Richardson Group
This slowly spreading perennial prefers cool summers, and is frequently self-seeding. 70cm. RHS H7, USDA 4a-7b†.

2 *Filipendula rubra* 'Venusta'
A tall and wind-resistant, self-seeding perennial that is valued for its candy-floss flower heads. 1.8m. AGM*. RHS H7, USDA 3a-8b.

3 *Gillenia trifoliata*
Bushy shaped, long-lived perennial with a good winter presence. 1m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

4 *Actaea rubra*
White flowers in spring are followed by shiny berries. Needs light shade and cool conditions. 50cm. RHS H7.

5 *Cercis canadensis*
A small tree with startling pink flowers and leaves that are best appreciated when back-lit. Important to plant young. 9m. RHS H5, USDA 4a-8b.

6 *Eryngium* x *zabelii* 'Jos Eijking'
Long lived and slowly clump-forming. Best in full sun. 70cm. RHS H5, USDA 5a-9b.

7 *Jasminum humile*
Semi-evergreen climber that can form a large shrub. Needs sun and a sheltered spot. 3m. RHS H5, USDA 7a-10b.

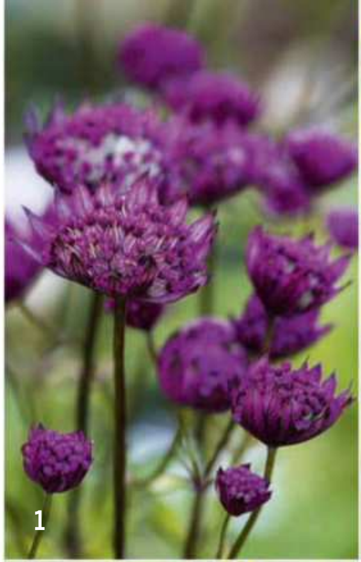
8 *Veronicastrum virginicum* 'Album'
Strongly upright demeanour over a very long period. 1.2m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

9 *Malva moschata* f. *alba*
A short-lived but self-seeding perennial with a long season of summer flowers. An important component in Chapelside's borders. 60cm. RHS H5, USDA 3a-8b.

10 *Bupleurum longifolium*
Short-lived but seeds well. Is especially good as a cut or dried flower. 70cm.

11 *Pratia pedunculata*
Very low growing but spreads easily. It looks lovely growing in lawns, although you will need to cease mowing for a few weeks to allow it to flower. Best on damp soils. 5cm. RHS H4, USDA 6a-10b.

12 *Mathiasella bupleuroides* 'Green Dream'
A rambling perennial that is often short-lived but self-seeding. The foliage remains a feature in winter. 1m.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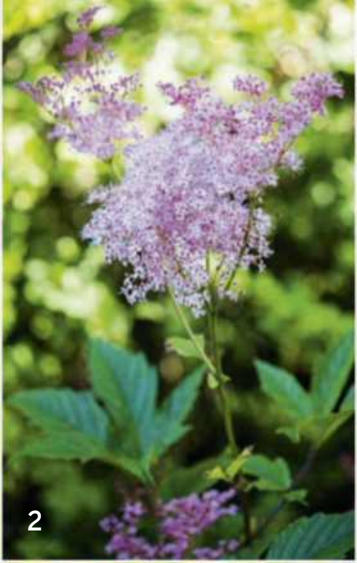
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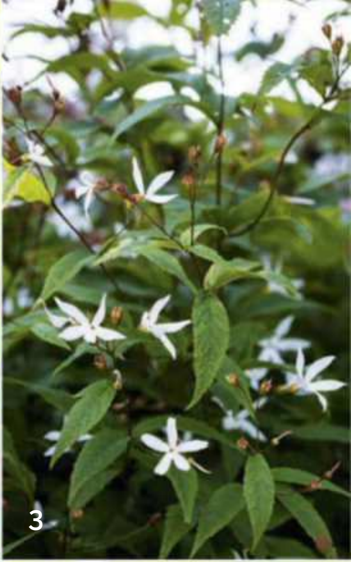
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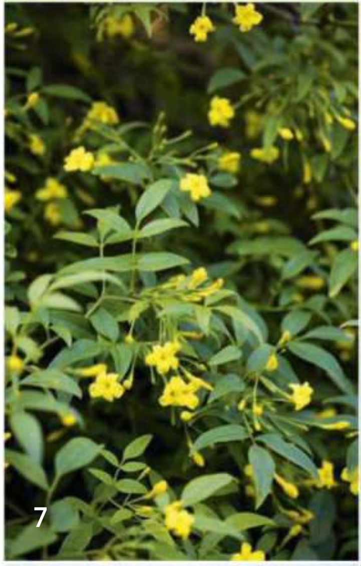
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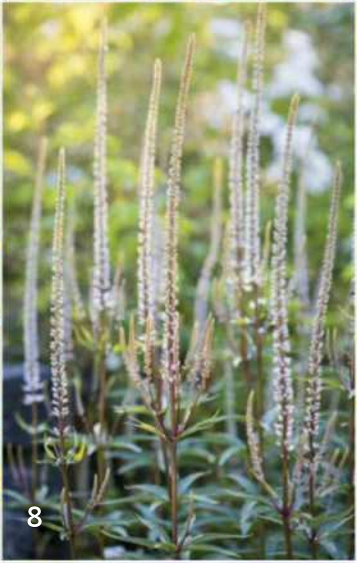
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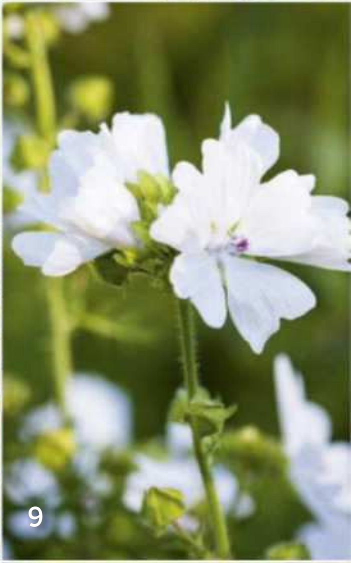
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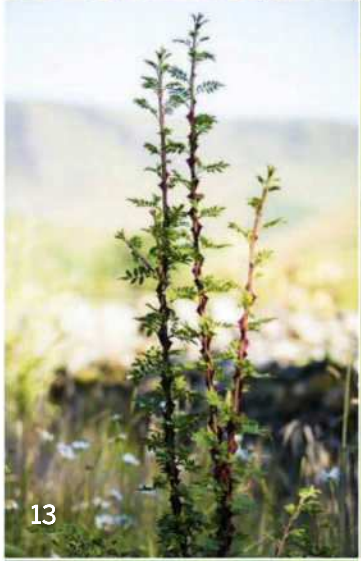
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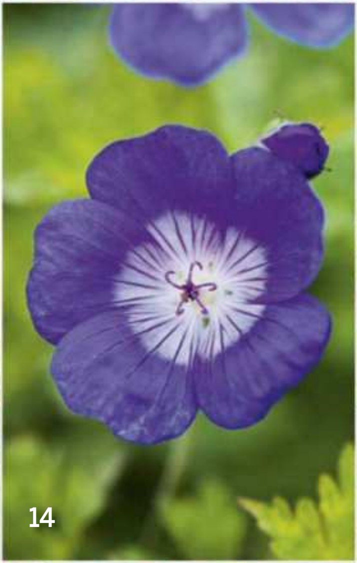
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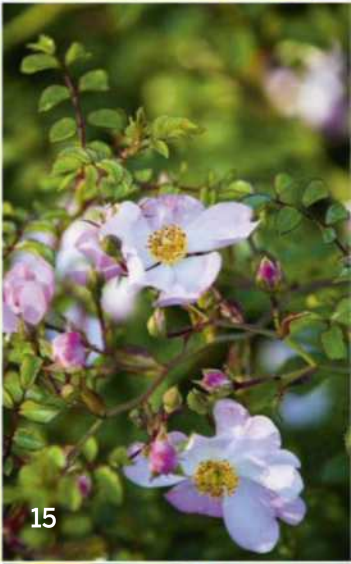
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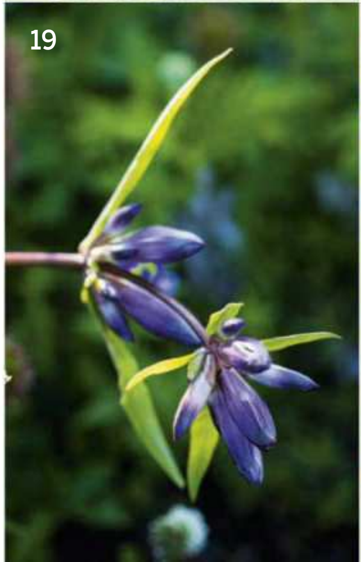
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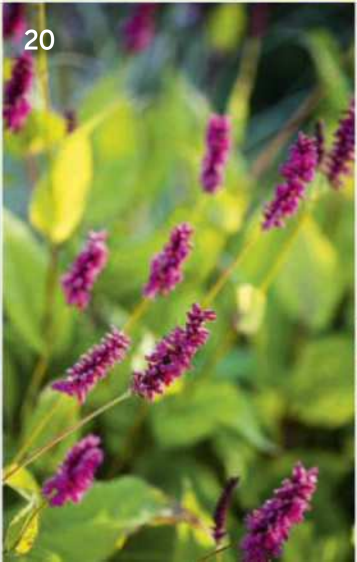
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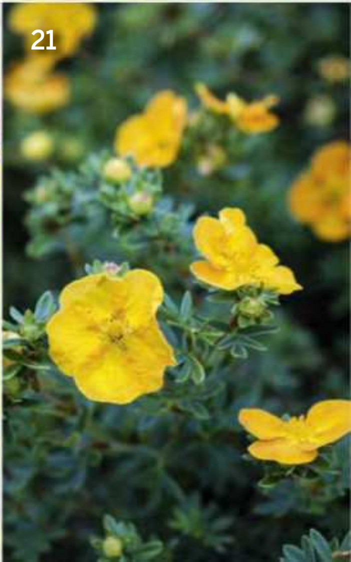
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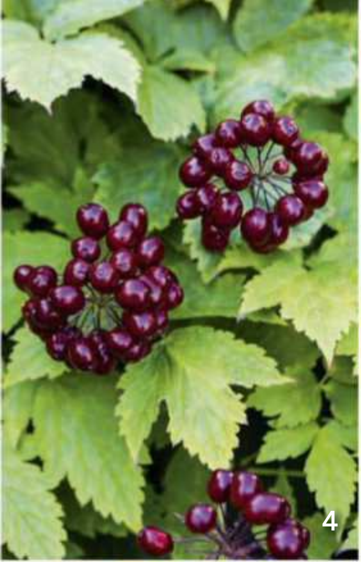
*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.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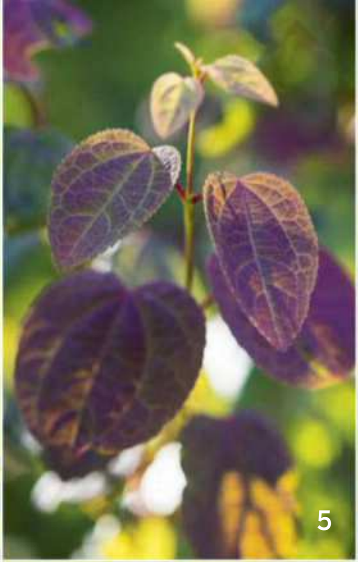
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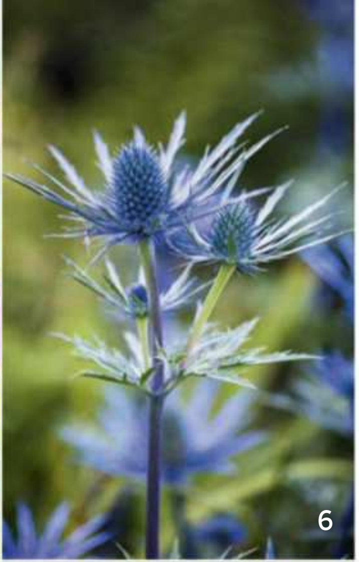
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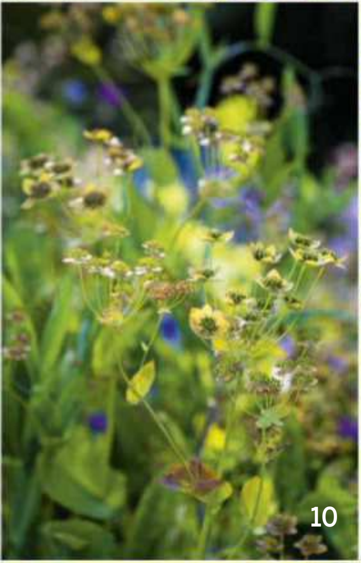
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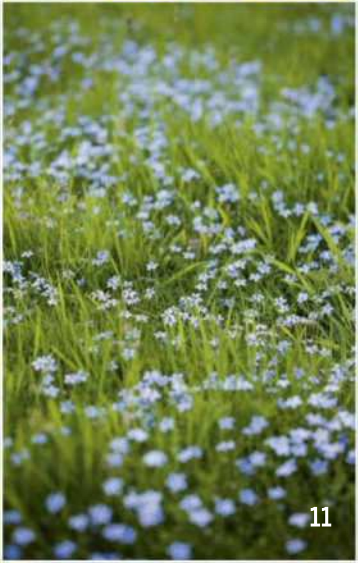
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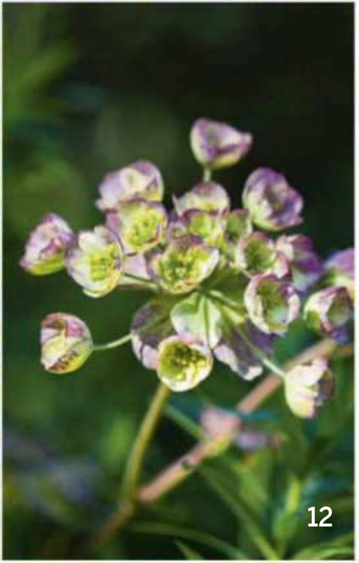
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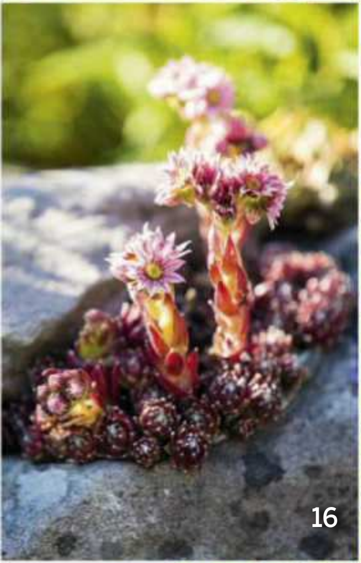
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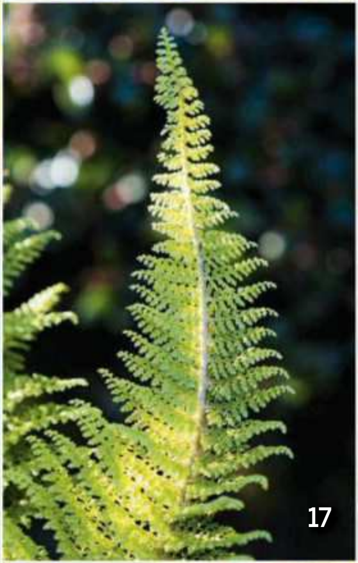
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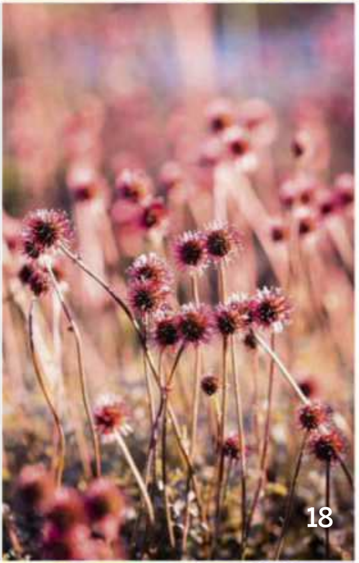
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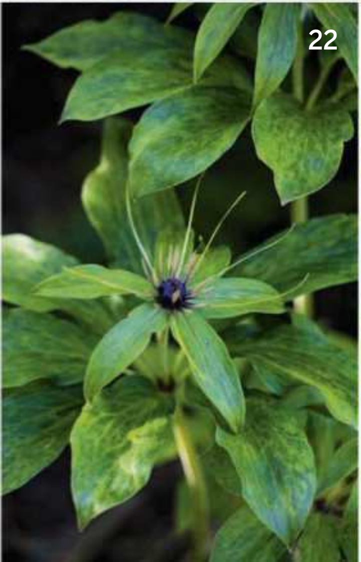
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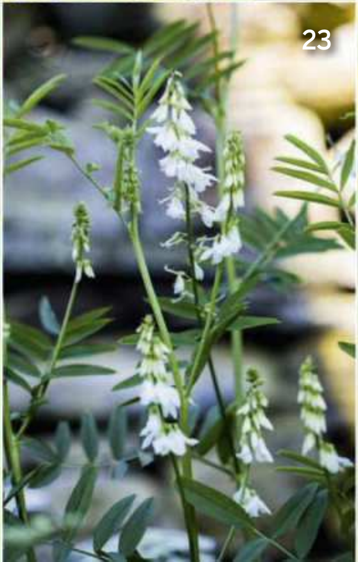
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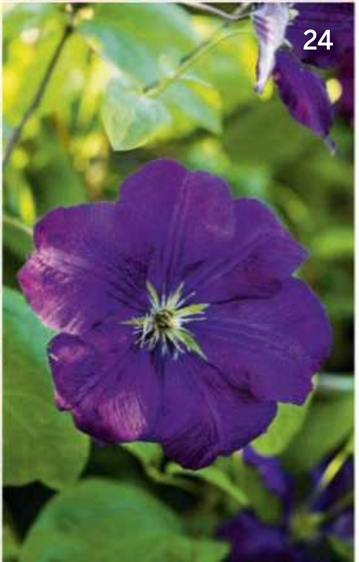
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13 *Rosa pteracantha*
Known as the winged thorn rose, this striking-looking plant looks great in rough grass where backlit by evening sun its thorns glow red. 3m. RHS H5.

14 *Geranium* Rozanne (= 'Gerwat')
A useful groundcover sprawler that flowers from June well into the autumn. 50cm. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

15 *Rosa* Grouse (= 'Korimro')
A groundcover rose that flowers late and repeats relatively well. 60cm. RHS H6, USDA 5a-9b.

16 *Sempervivum montanum*
Known as the mountain houseleek, this small, semi-succulent alpine will flourish in dry-stone wall tops and crevices. 15cm. RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

17 *Dryopteris filix-mas*
This adaptable fern species thrives in Cumbria's damp climate. 1m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b .

18 *Acaena inermis*
Creates a prostrate ferny carpet with rusty burrs that last over winter. Spreads rapidly and is potentially invasive. 12cm. RHS H5, USDA 5a-8b.

19 *Gentiana asclepiadea*
Slow to establish but rewarding once it does. Flowers midsummer and needs a cool position. 80cm. AGM. RHS H5.

20 *Persicaria amplexicaulis*
A large, slowly spreading perennial with a long flowering season. Very low maintenance. 1.2m. RHS H7, USDA 4a-7b.

21 *Potentilla fruticosa* 'Goldfinger'
Low shrub with summer flowers. It's a cold desert plant so very tough. 1m. RHS H7, USDA 3a-7b.

22 *Paris polyphylla*
Spring-flowering woodlander for humus-rich soils with intriguing, exotic-looking green flowers. Increases slowly. 45cm. RHS H7, USDA 3a-8b.

23 *Galega officinalis* 'Alba'
Long-lived, summer-flowering perennial with attractive foliage. Mixes well with other plants. 1.2m. RHS H7, USDA 4a-9b.

24 *Clematis* 'Étoile Violette'
Flowers profusely from July to September and is a vigorous climbing plant. 3m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

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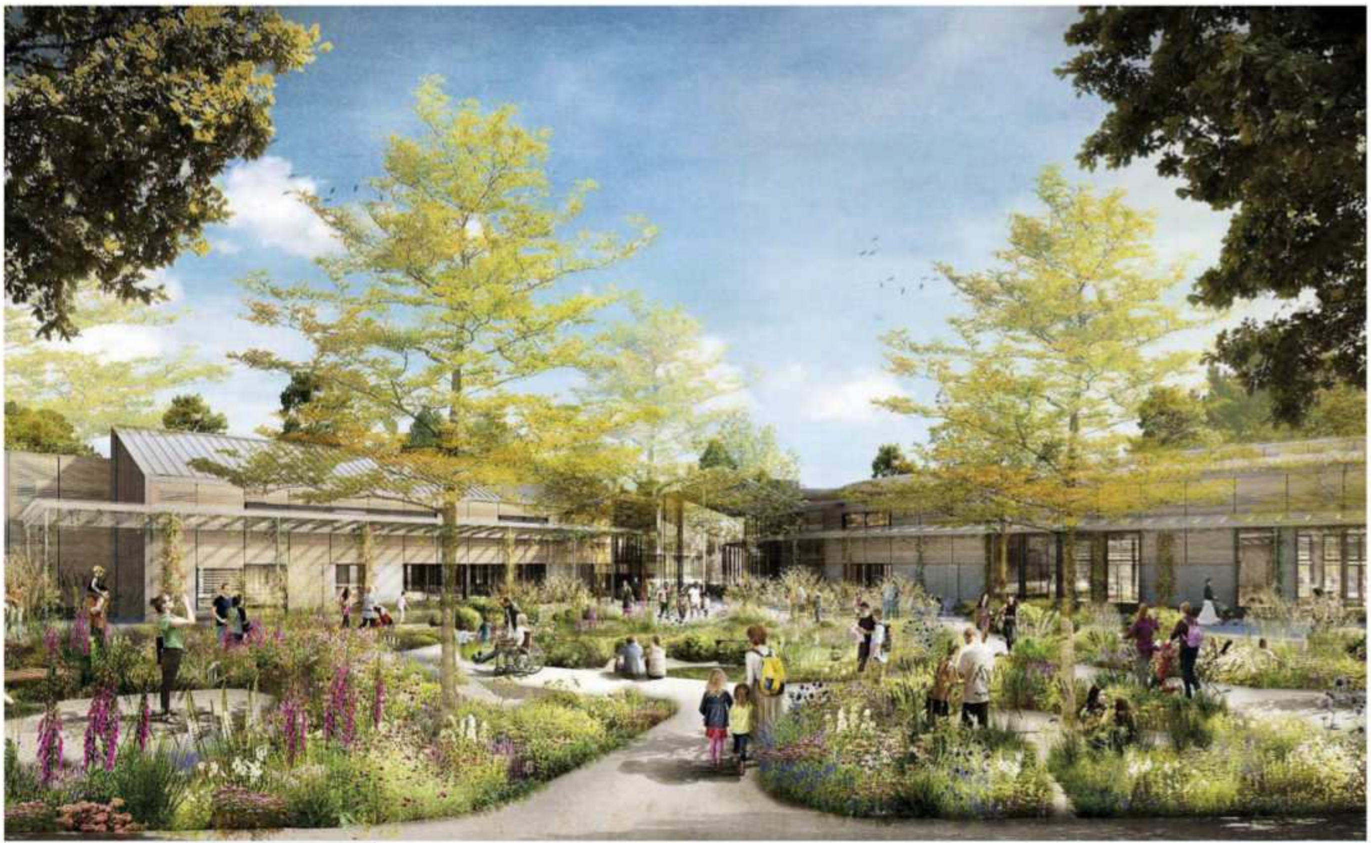
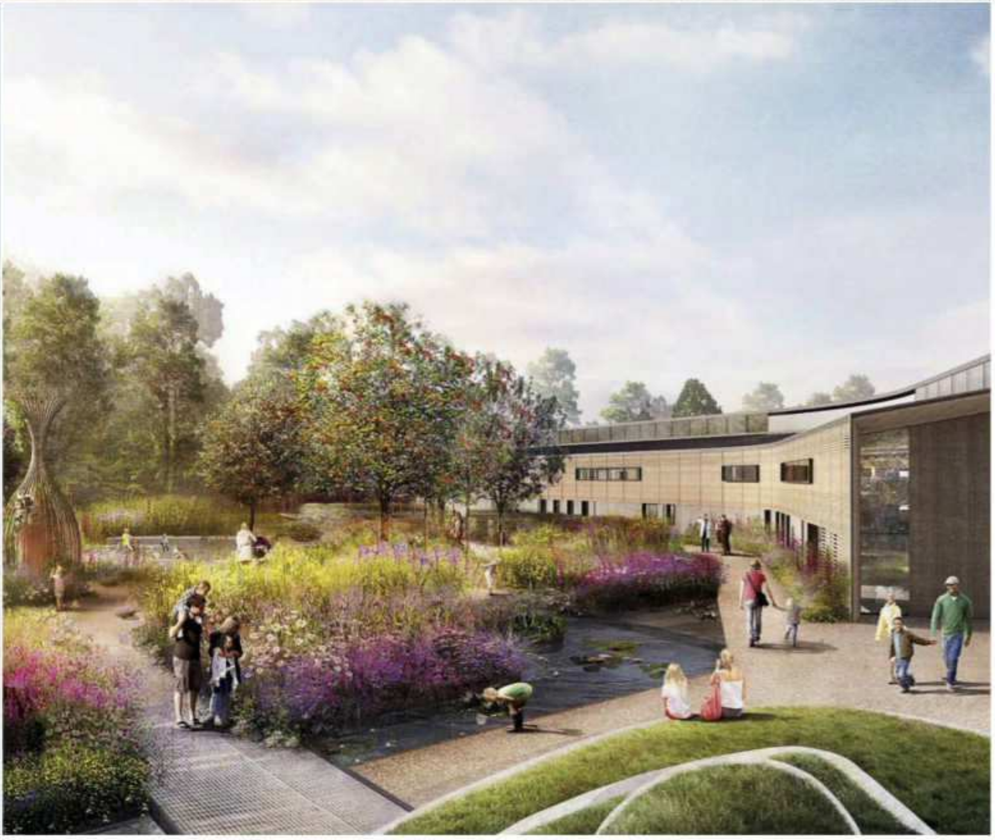
DESIGN

News, ideas and sourcebook



GOOD HEALTH

Visitors to this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show got a glimpse of what Matt Keightley's Garden for Wellbeing will look like when it opens at RHS Garden Wisley in 2020. It's one of three learning gardens that will surround the new National Centre for Horticultural Science and Learning and designs for all three have now been revealed. The Garden for Wellbeing (above) will be approached through cloud-pruned *Pinus mugo* cultivars and is made up of a series of large, fragmented beds, filled with exuberant plantings of perennials and grasses. A serpentine rill will leads from the café terrace to a still pool, and terraced lawns will create a transition between this garden and Ann-Marie Powell's Wildlife Garden (right). Here, in a design that borrows from the structure of a bee's wing, steel-edged beds will support separate plantings of native and non-native plants. A path through the trees on Battleson Hill will lead visitors to the World Food Garden, also designed by Ann-Marie Powell.



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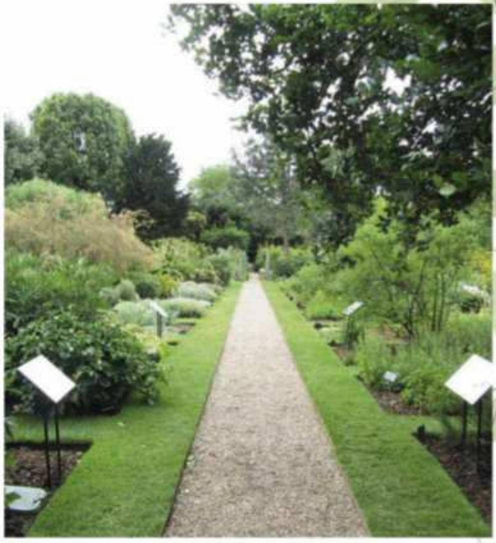

Garden of Medicinal Plants – Chelsea Physic Garden Photo: R Alexander

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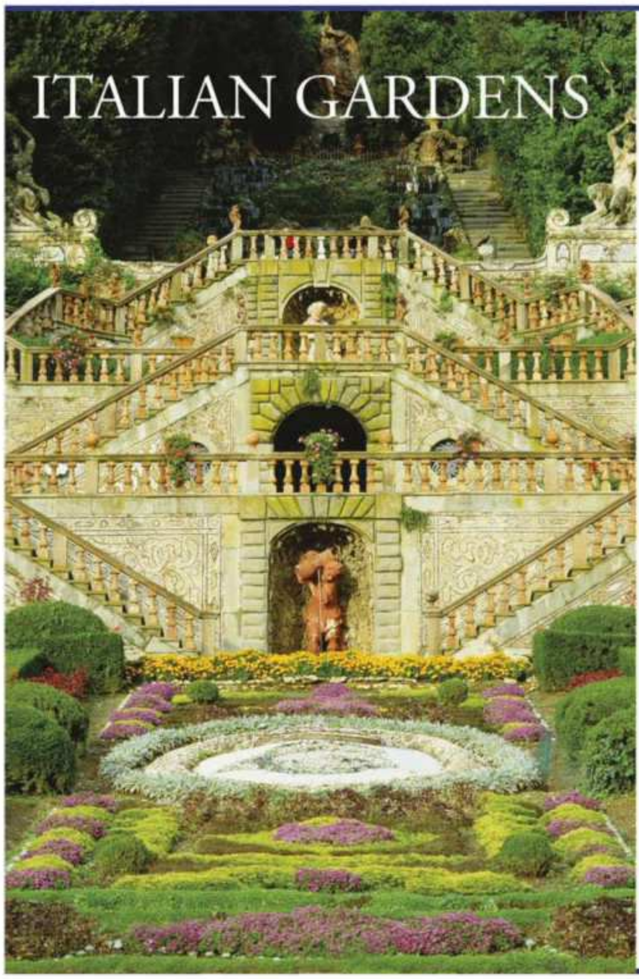

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DESIGN

NEWS

COMPILED BY ANNIE GATTI

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① ART, VILLES & PAYSAGE

The 9th Festival of Art, Villas & Paysage – Hortillonnages opened on 9 June in Amiens, France, with ten new exhibits and around another 40 exhibits from previous years. This year new installations have also been created for the nearby towns of Abbeville, Saint-Quentin and Long. At Abbeville, the French landscape architect practice, Atelier LJN has devised a series of tall observation platforms on stilts, sited in the marshy landscape between two large lakes in Bouvaque Park. The cone-shaped structures provide places to sit and observe nature. Until 21 October. **somme-tourisme.com**

② PARK LINKS

London-based landscape architecture practice Gilliespies has landscaped gardens for a new residential development in London's Holland Park. Clipped hornbeams and a mature *Acer palmatum* create an elegant entrance to the two-acre garden. At its centre a secluded courtyard, ringed by a moat and planted with multi-stem trees provides a tranquil space. Stepping stones lead through naturalistic planting to steel-edged reflective pools and clipped box balls. Beyond this a woodland walk with wildflowers wraps round the development on three sides, linking it to the adjacent park. **gillespies.co.uk**

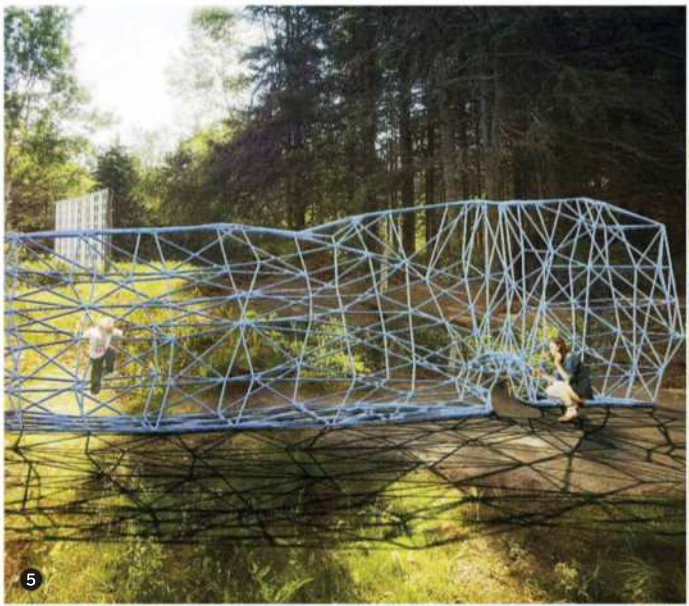
③ SINGAPORE GARDEN FESTIVAL

Thirteen international designers, including Malaysia's Inch Lim, winner of Best in Show in 2016, Kate Gould and Tom Massey from the UK and Ireland's Paul Martin, will create gardens in the Landscape and Fantasy Gardens category of the seventh edition of the biennial Singapore Garden Festival. The British designer Andy Sturgeon is collaborating with Australia's Jim Fogarty on a garden that reflects the problem of screen addiction in children. Stone cubes and pavers will symbolise keyboard keys and lead to a simple pool surrounded by organic plant forms 21 July – 3 August. **singaporegardenfestival.com**

④ RHS FLOWER SHOW TATTON PARK

Now in its tenth year the RHS Young Designer Competition at RHS Flower Show Tatton Park will give five new designers all aged 28 and under the chance to kickstart their careers with their designs for a 'feel good' garden. The youngest finalist is Will Williams, 22, who has incorporated masses of plants that attract bees and butterflies into his geometric plan (above), Nicola Oakey, 28, has based her garden, Raised by Rivers, around memories of growing up in Devon, while Eds Higgins, also 28, has taken the potential of wasteland sites as valuable green spaces for his Finding (Urban) Nature design. 18-22 July. **rhs.org.uk**

1 ATELIER L.J.N; 2 GILLESPIES; 3 ANDY STURGEON; 4 WILL WILLIAMS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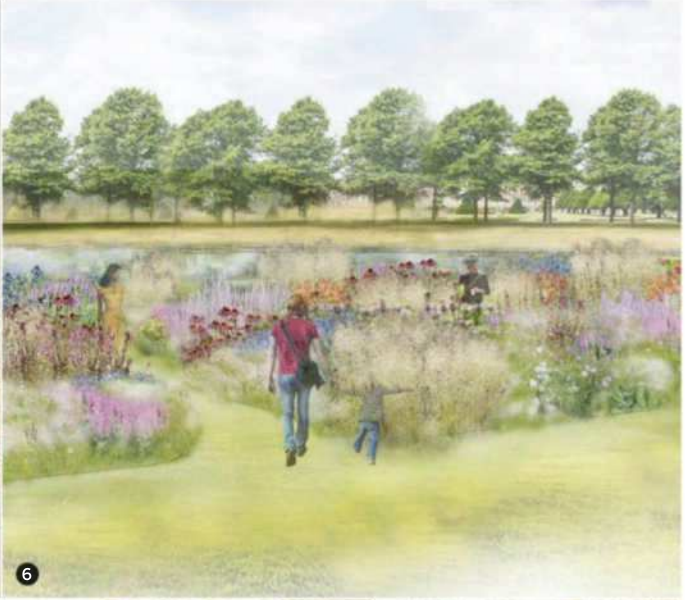
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⑤ INTERNATIONAL GARDEN FESTIVAL AT GRAND-MÉTIS

The theme of last year's International Garden Festival at Grand-Métis, Canada, was Playsages (Go Outside and Play). For this year's, 19th edition that theme continues with seven new projects, selected from 148 entries from 27 countries. The winning gardens include aMAIZEing by Spanish duo Marta Milà Pascual and Marc Torrellas Arnedo and Le Rocher Très Percé (above) by Humà Design and Vincent Lemay from Montreal. The festival is open daily until 7 October. **internationalgardenfestival.com**

⑥ RHS HAMPTON COURT PALACE FLOWER SHOW

Renowned Dutch landscape designer Piet Oudolf will create a walk-through border at this year's RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show. Sited opposite the Palace, the border is the first in a new Iconic Horticultural Heroes feature, and will use bold drifts of perennials and grasses, which will relocate to RHS Garden Wisley after the show. And to mark the centenary year of women's suffrage in the UK, all four gardens in the new Lifestyle Gardens category have been created by up-and-coming women designers: Alexandra Noble, Ula Maria, Anca Panait and Lilly Gomm. 2-8 July. **rhs.org.uk**

⑦ HORATIO'S GARDEN, STANMORE

Tom Stuart-Smith, in collaboration with architect Stephen Marshall, has designed a new Horatio's Garden for the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, Stanmore. The garden, the fifth in a series of spaces for specialist centres treating patients with spinal cord injuries, consists of two separate areas, linked by a corridor. One colourful side has a greenhouse and barbecue area, while the other is a greener, more contemplative space with a series of enclosed pods where patients can feel surrounded by planting. Fundraising is underway and it's hoped the garden will be completed by 2020. **horatiosgarden.org.uk**

⑧ TROPICAL RAVINE, BELFAST BOTANIC GARDENS

The Victorian Topical Ravine at Belfast Botanic Gardens has re-opened after a £3.8 million refurbishment. The ravine was originally opened in 1889 as a sunken glen filled with temperate species. It was later extended in 1900 to house tropical plants, and today contains some of the world's oldest seed plants as well as plants such as the Killarney fern, orchids, cinnamon trees, banana trees and bromeliads. The three-year restoration has introduced a state-of-the-art fogging and misting system and a frameless glass façade. **belfastcity.gov.uk**

5 HUMA DESIGN; PIET OUDOLF; 7 TOM STUART SMITH; 8 BELFAST BOTANIC GARDEN

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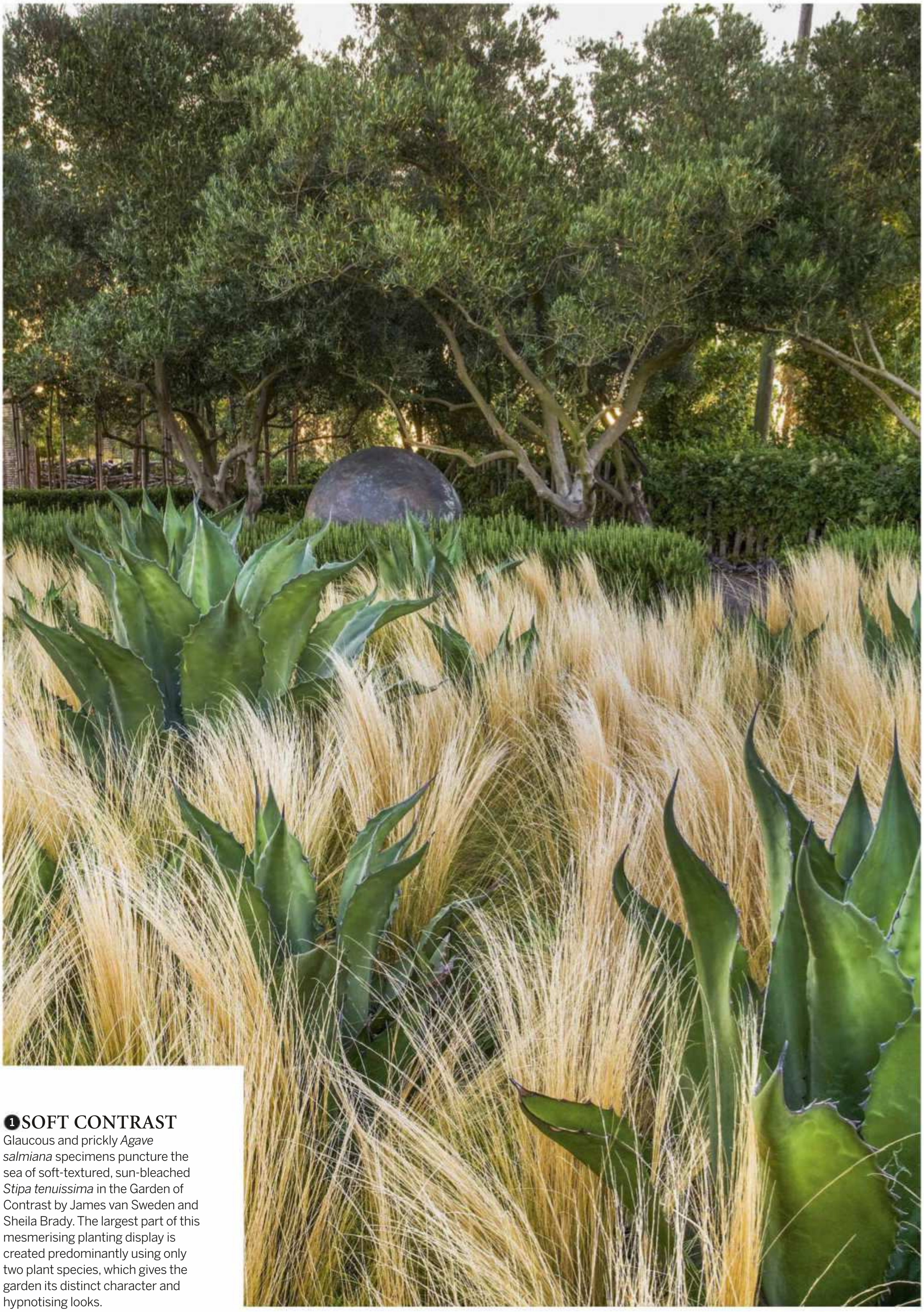

❶SOFT CONTRAST

Glaucous and prickly *Agave salmiana* specimens puncture the sea of soft-textured, sun-bleached *Stipa tenuissima* in the Garden of Contrast by James van Sweden and Sheila Brady. The largest part of this mesmerising planting display is created predominantly using only two plant species, which gives the garden its distinct character and hypnotising looks.

1 SAXON HOLT / PHOTOBOTANIC, DESIGN OEHME VAN SWEDEN

THE POWER OF SIMPLICITY

In the first of a new series, RHS Young Designer of the Year Ula Maria argues that when designing your garden it's best to keep things simple

WORDS ULA MARIA

Ula Maria is an award-winning garden designer, landscape architect and illustrator. She was named the RHS Young Designer of the Year in 2017.

Have you ever witnessed the magic of the bluebell sea in the woods awakening after the winter? The blissful combination of a blue flower carpet covering the woodland floor, and the freshly sprouting leaves of the trees falls nothing short of enchanting. When I was walking in the West Woods near Marlborough at the beginning of May, I thought to myself, how simple yet powerful the spectacle created with a single species of this elegant flower. That is nature showing us all the power of simplicity.

Simplicity is pure, elegant and timeless. As Leonardo da Vinci once said: 'Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication'. It denotes clarity and honesty of the design. It doesn't leave any space for unnecessary additives or clutter to distract the eye, but just enough interest to keep one's attention. I believe the most successful form of simplicity is when the design becomes almost invisible and creates an illusion that the space has always been that way, before someone has inhabited it.

It is important to note that simplicity does not equal simpleness. In fact, it is an artful skill to achieve simplicity in its purest form. The most effortless-looking space is often a result of a complex design process where every detail has been carefully considered, and intricate ideas refined to their purest expressions. The little things have to create maximum effects.

Eliminating any superfluous elements allows room and freedom to draw the focus on the key elements of the design. It never fails to amaze me how magnificent every design detail, material, and plant look when they are carefully placed and given the right context.

BONES OF THE GARDEN

I have always looked at the hard landscaping as the bones of the garden, or the canvas of a painting. Unless it is designed to become a focal point or a key feature of the garden, the hard landscape should act as a breathing space – uncluttered, distilled and timeless.

It is generally a good practice to think of the garden as an extension of a house and select timeless-looking materials that will complement the garden surroundings. Carrying materials from the interior space works incredibly well in smaller gardens. In most cases, you will be able to draw inspiration from the existing features on site, such as the bricks used for the house or the timber used for an interior floor.

The simpler and more refined the material palette from the outset, the more cohesive the garden will look. Try to picture your hard landscaping material palette as a photographic background for your garden. The plants will become the true stars of the picture and they will most likely look their best against the unified, simple backdrop.

LESS IS MORE IN NATURE

One of the most common habits of garden enthusiasts, myself included, that often leads into a restless garden is 'over doing it' with the variety and mixture of plants. Like with everything, we should follow the rule of less is more. It is important to know when to stop. Adding more and more plants of different styles, colours, textures and garden areas contradicting their natural habitats can result in a muddle if we are not careful when arranging these.

To achieve simplicity within the planting, look for inspiration in nature. Remember how magical the carpets of bluebells in the woods look in spring, or swathes of white cow parsley in summer. Try to find a group of plants that grow and work as well together as these prime examples we see in nature.

You can also begin by picking two or three of your favourite colours. In most cases, these should be complementary rather than clashing to ensure they will work well together. Once you have chosen your plants, plant them in large groups and swathes trying to adapt and distil the inspiration you find in nature.

Planting in larger groups will make a bigger impact. The forms, textures and colours of the plants will become more apparent and this way it will be easier to create a distinct character and spatial identity for the garden.

GOD IS IN THE DETAILS

It is important to say, that simplicity does not and must not mean boring or soulless. I always remember the words of the German architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe: 'God is in the details'. Clear and calm, every garden should still have its unique character that lives through careful selection of the details. These, like in a great artist's painting, should be the finishing touches that make the space different and special. It might prove difficult to not be tempted by an incredibly beautiful selection of pots, troughs and sculptures, it's important to keep within the theme and character of the garden.

I believe that a series of empty spaces within a garden are often good spaces that give freedom for thought, exploration, and flexibility within the garden. Likewise, simplicity leaves room for improvement and growth, which is always exciting. It is important to remember that there are layers within the garden like in a great painting. You can always add more details once you have a strong background to begin with.

NEXT MONTH Finding beauty in imperfection.

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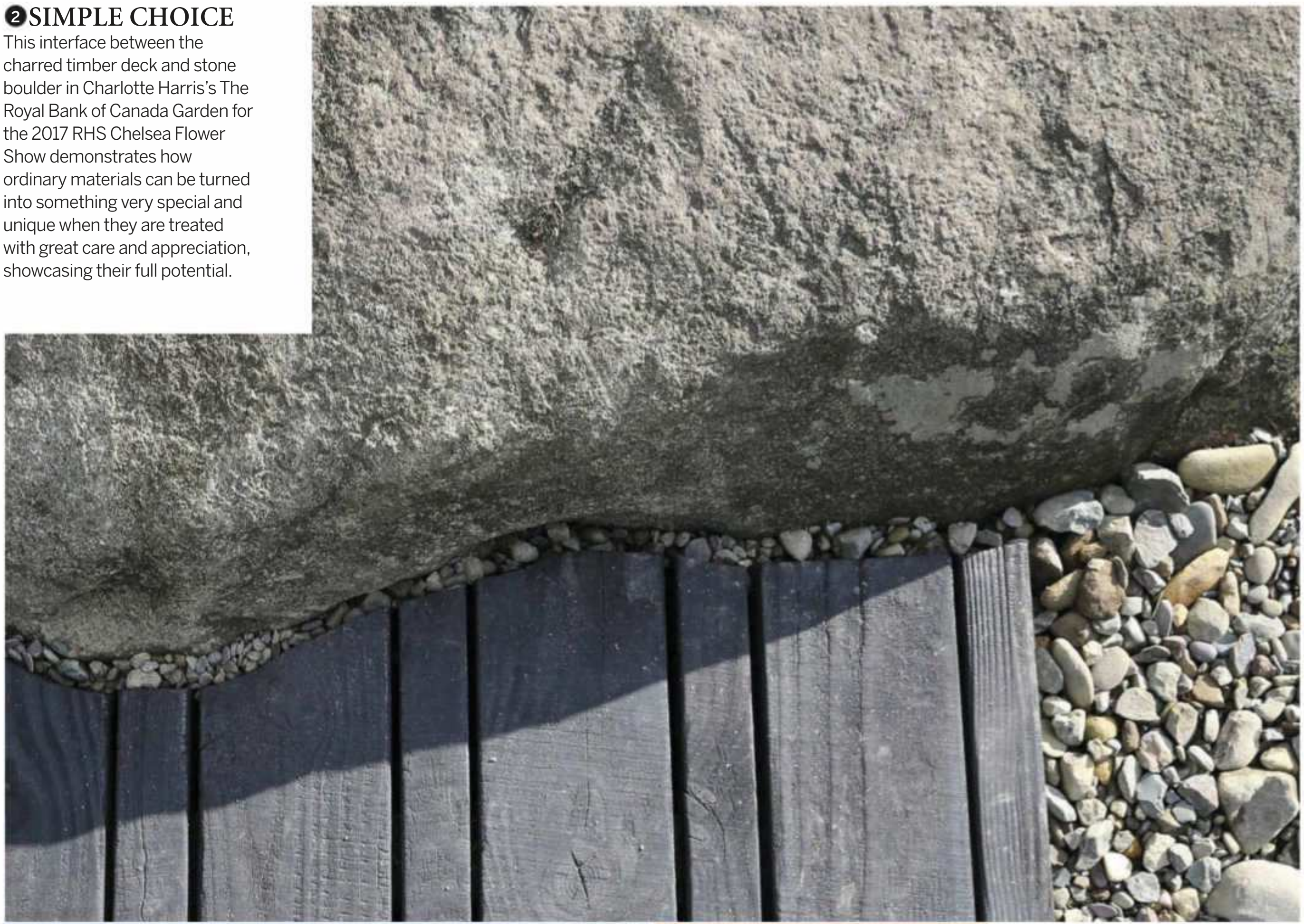
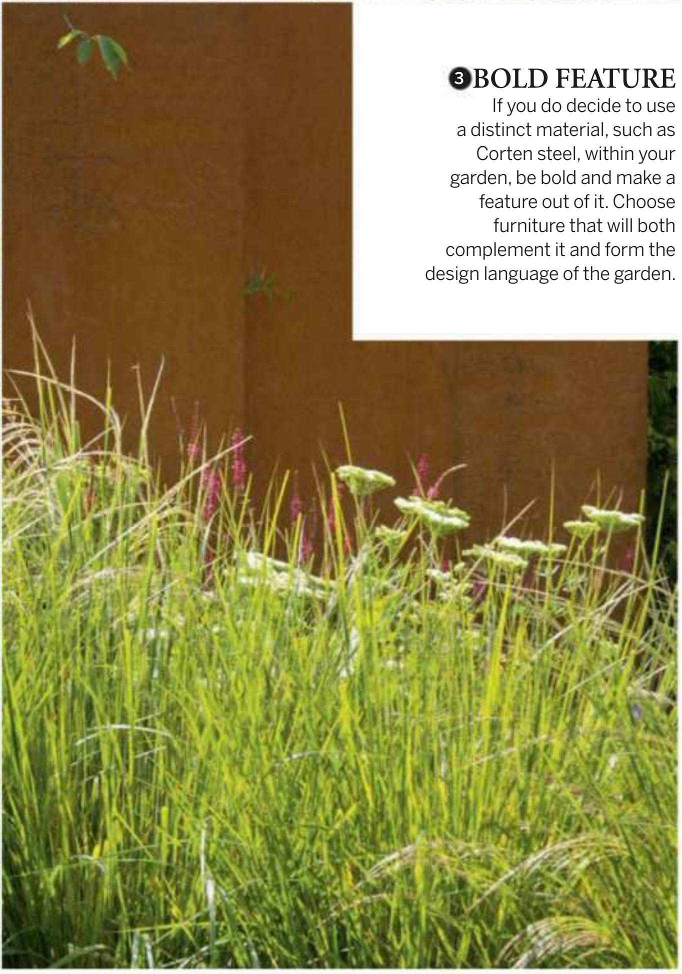


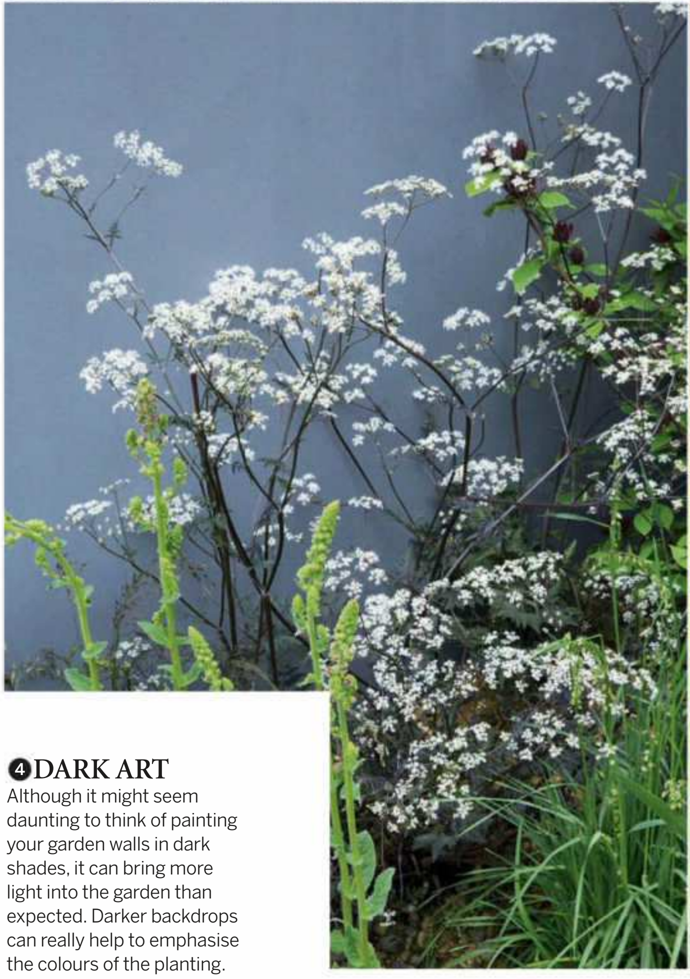
❷SIMPLE CHOICE

This interface between the charred timber deck and stone boulder in Charlotte Harris's The Royal Bank of Canada Garden for the 2017 RHS Chelsea Flower Show demonstrates how ordinary materials can be turned into something very special and unique when they are treated with great care and appreciation, showcasing their full potential.



❸BOLD FEATURE

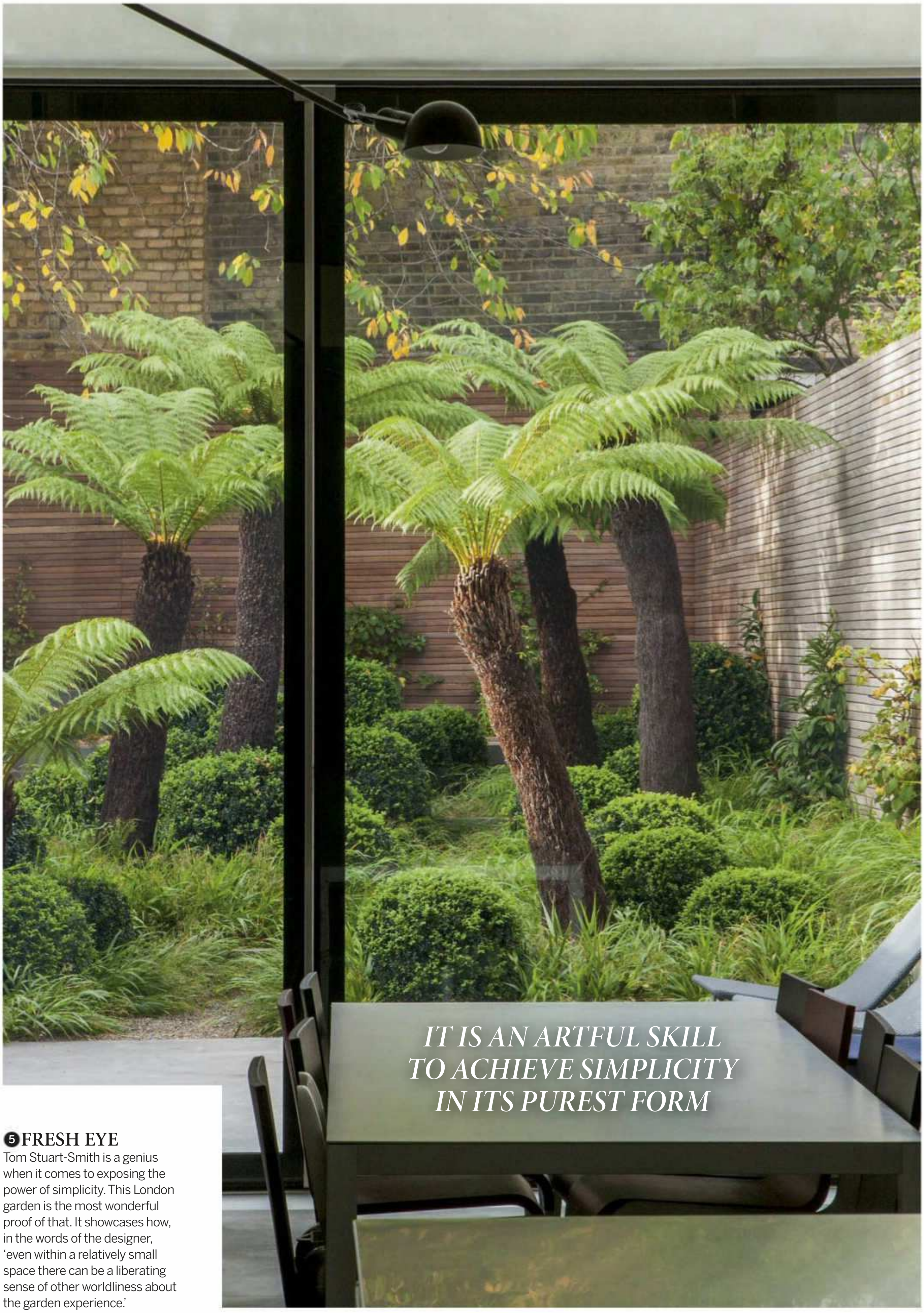
If you do decide to use a distinct material, such as Corten steel, within your garden, be bold and make a feature out of it. Choose furniture that will both complement it and form the design language of the garden.



❹DARK ART

Although it might seem daunting to think of painting your garden walls in dark shades, it can bring more light into the garden than expected. Darker backdrops can really help to emphasise the colours of the planting.

2 CHARLOTTE HARRIS / HARRIS BUGG STUDIO; 3 MARIANNE MAJERUS, CLOUDY BAY DISCOVERY GARDEN, RHS CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW 2013 / DESIGN ANDREW WILSON AND GAVIN McWILLIAM; 4 MARIANNE MAJERUS, DESIGN SARA JANE ROTHWELL



IT IS AN ARTFUL SKILL TO ACHIEVE SIMPLICITY IN ITS PUREST FORM

⑤FRESH EYE

Tom Stuart-Smith is a genius when it comes to exposing the power of simplicity. This London garden is the most wonderful proof of that. It showcases how, in the words of the designer, 'even within a relatively small space there can be a liberating sense of other worldliness about the garden experience.'

5 MARIANNE MAJERUS, DESIGN TOM STUART-SMITH

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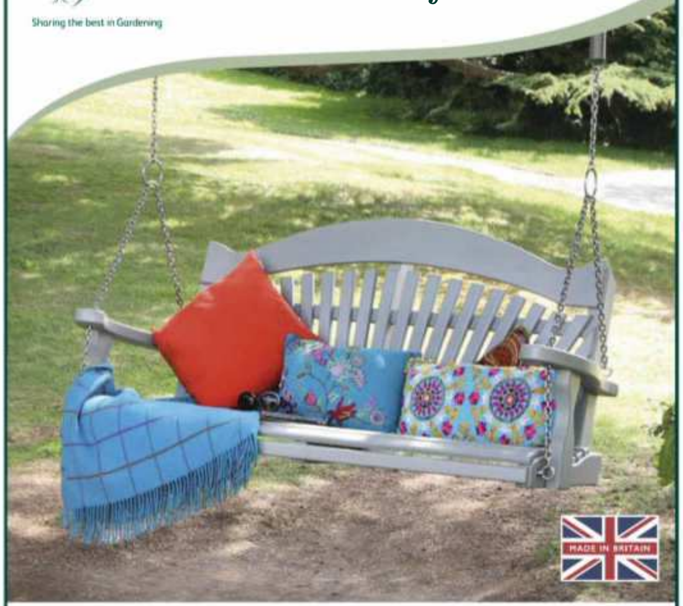

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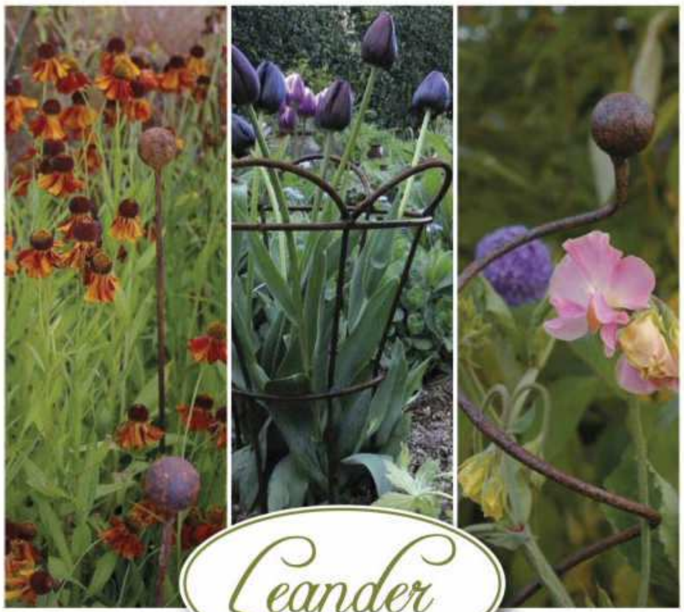

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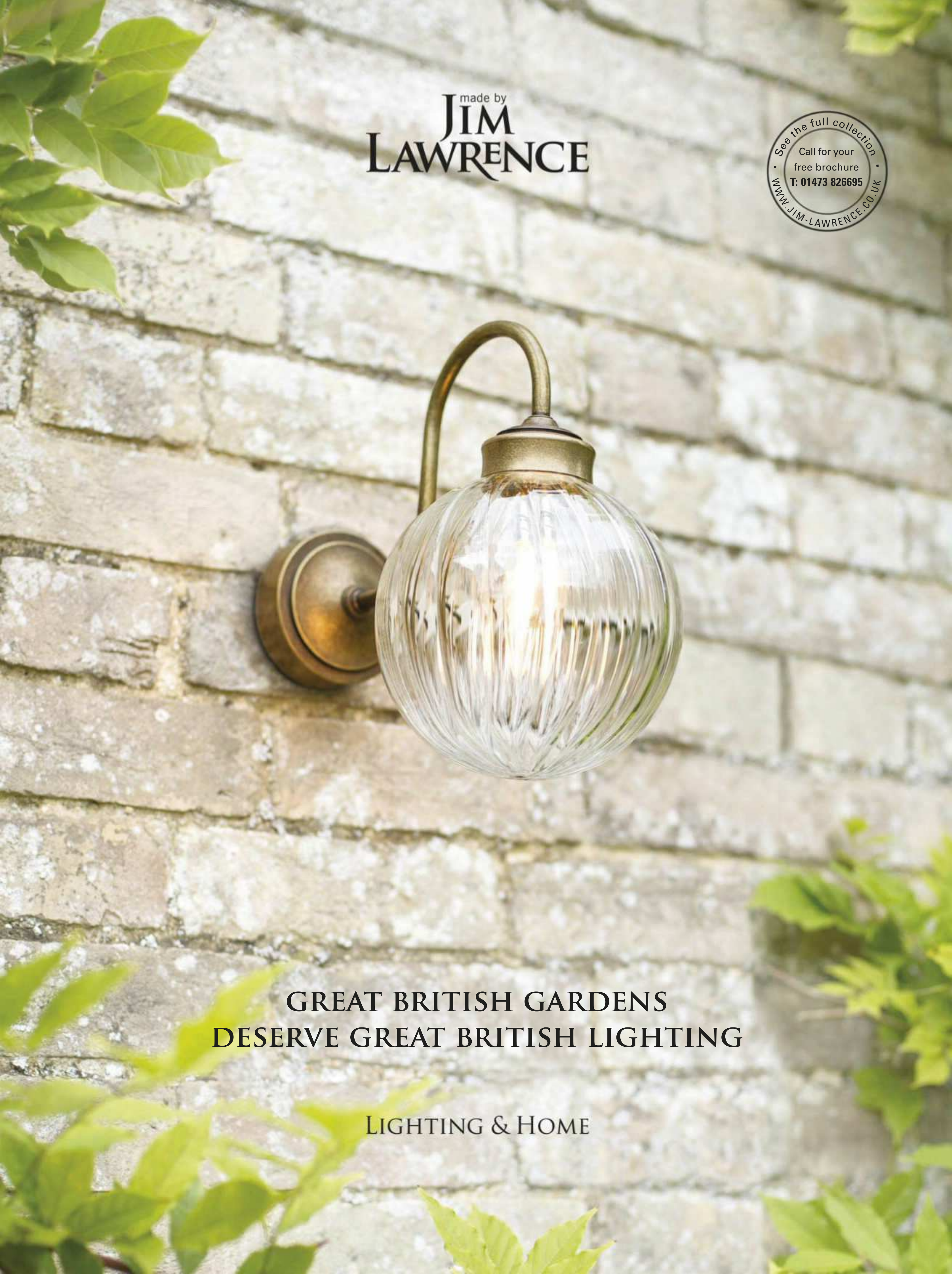
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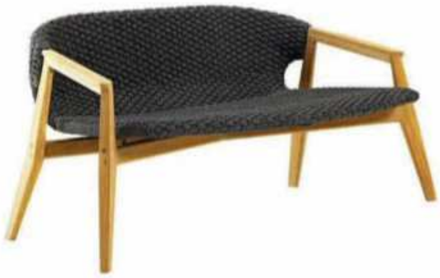

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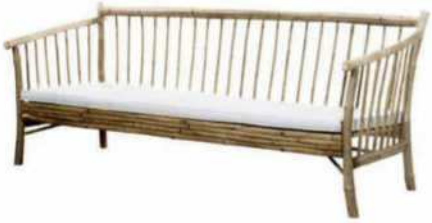
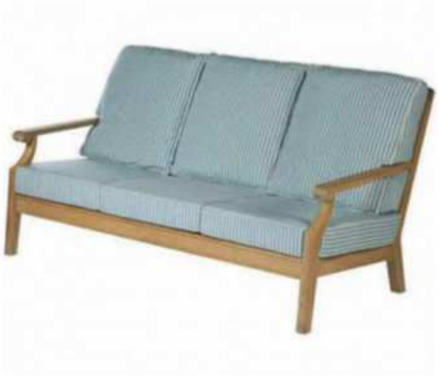
Ethimo Knit Two Seater Sofa in teak,
£2,400, Houseology,
0330 256 7354, houseology.com



NATURAL APPEAL
Tine K Bamboo Sofa,
£840, Idyll Home,
01270 812717, idyllhome.co.uk



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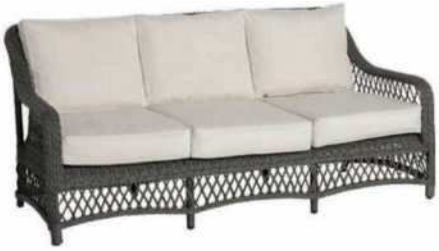
Chesapeake Three-Seater Settee,
£1,980, Barlow Tyrie,
01376 557600, teak.com



TRADITIONAL RATTAN
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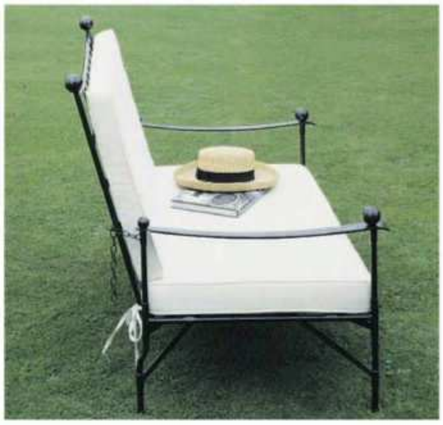
£1,150, Neptune,
01793 427427, neptune.com



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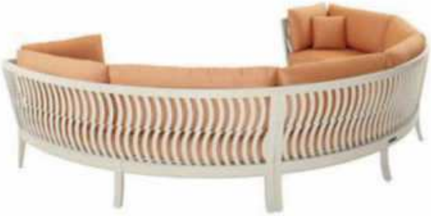

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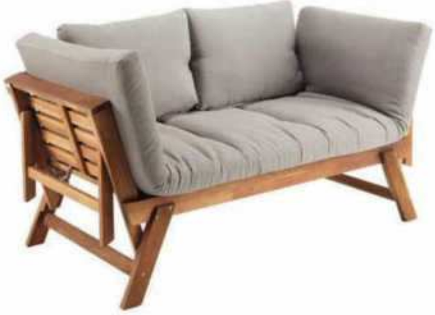

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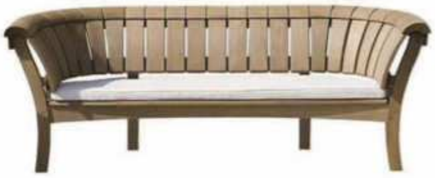

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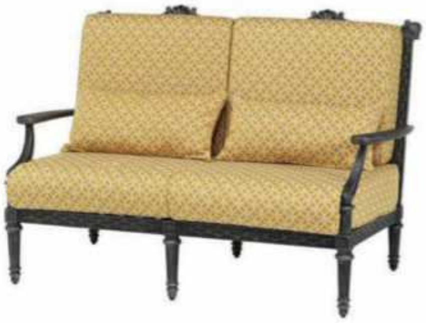
01420 588444, gazeburvill.com



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PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

6-23 September
Bergamo's historic Piazza Vecchia is transformed into a Green Square, designed by Piet Oudolf as a space to relax and gather.

7 September
The Université d'Eté conference on Green Infrastructure.

8-9 September
Alpine seminars held in the mountains to consider the alpine environment.

19-20 September
Valfredda perennials seminars from Nigel Dunnett, Thomas Rainer and Piet Oudolf.

21-22 September
International Meeting of the Landscape and Garden conference.

6-23 SEPTEMBER 2018, BERGAMO, ITALY

PLANT LANDSCAPE

I Maestri del Paesaggio: International Meeting of the Landscape and Garden

Held in the historic heart of the northern Italian city of Bergamo, this 20-day event will celebrate landscape and gardens, with an international audience invited to explore key elements in planting and design. The focus for discussion at this year's event will be the plants themselves – without which no garden or landscape would exist. Events will consider how using plants to create a green space needs careful consideration and ongoing care to ensure the success of any planting scheme. One of the best-known proponents of planting design, the Dutch designer Piet Oudolf, will play a key role at this year's event in discussing his approach to planting at some of his landmark projects.

Visitors are invited to attend a range of activities and events, including the weekend conference. All events are aimed at both professional plantsmen and designers and interested public. This is a great opportunity to be part of a horticulturally inspired gathering.

BEPPE BANA, MATTEO BONALDI, MAURO BERTOLINI

Landscape and Garden weekend conference

Date 21-22 September **Venue** Teatro Sociale, Bergamo, Italy **Cost** €150. Full details of the conference and all events can be found at **imaestridelpaesaggio.it/2018/index.html**

Special offer The first 20 *Gardens Illustrated* readers to sign up for the conference will receive a 30% discount* on the conference ticket price. Insert the code imdp2018-gardens-30 in the conference enrolment section when registering for your place. * Offer may not be combined with any other promotion and excludes previous conference attendees.

LANDSCAPE & GARDEN EVENT
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The town square of Bergamo is transformed into a green space with events taking place throughout the historic city.

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Landscape and Garden conference: 21-22 September 2018

Atelier Le Balto (Germany)
Landscape architects based in Berlin and working on projects and installations across Europe – most often in public spaces.

Louis Benech (France)
One of Louis' first major projects was the restoration of the historic Jardin des Tuileries in Paris. Now, as part of a practice of 12, Louis has worked on some 300 projects both private and public, throughout the world.

Bjarke Ingels (Denmark)
In 2016, *Time* magazine listed Bjarke as one of the 100 Most Influential People in the World. His studio BIG Bjarke Ingels Group is known for its innovative approach to architecture.

Winy Maas (the Netherlands)
Co-founder of MVRDV architects and urban planning practice, Winy is sought after for his opinions on the future of our cities.

Sandra Piesik (UK)
As an architect, Sandra focuses on combining traditional methods together with modern applications.

Thomas Piper (USA)
Thomas is an award-winning, documentary filmmaker. His latest project *Five Seasons: The Gardens of Piet Oudolf* looks at Piet's creative approach to planting.

Filippo Pizzoni (Italy)
Architect, landscape architect and garden historian and founder of aMAZING_sTUDIO.

WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS

Summer School: 12-22 September 2018, Bergamo (€400)

Students from a range of disciplines are invited to apply for the summer school, which this year looks at the idea of the Bio Park. The 15 selected students will work towards creating a new public park for the outskirts of Bergamo. This will act both as recreational space and environmental green corridor.

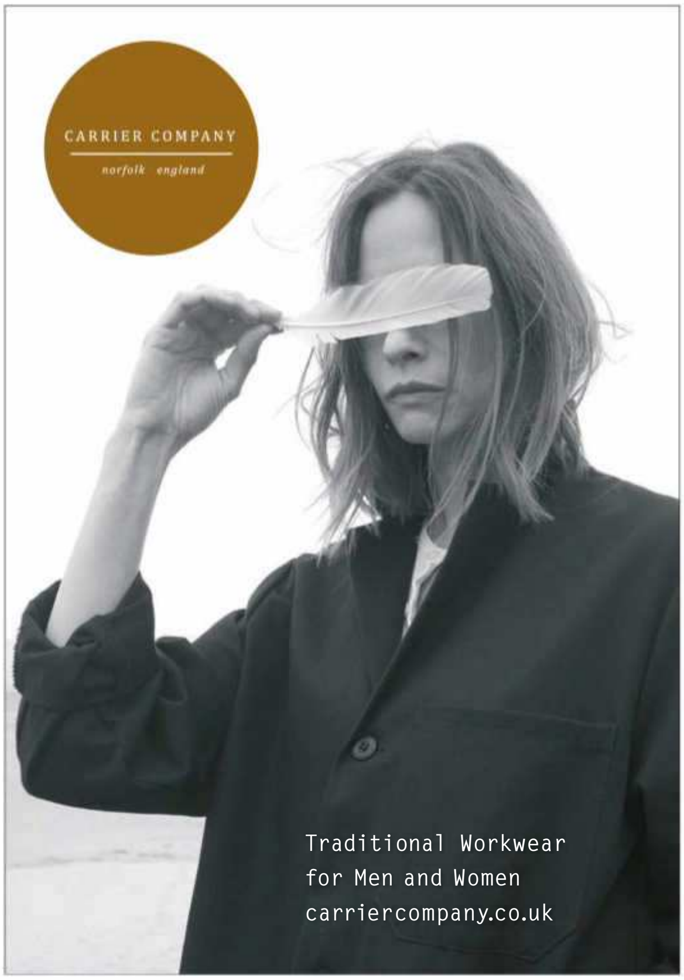
Closing date for applicants 25 August 2018
For further information on the summer school and how to apply, email **elisabetta.bianchessi@arketipos.org**

Valfredda Perennials Seminars: 19 and 20 September. Sign up to your choice of seminar with these leading plantsmen. Valfredda is the European leader in the production of herbaceous perennials. Joining Valfredda this year are:

Nigel Dunnett (UK)
Professor of planting design and vegetation technology at University of Sheffield, known for his innovative approach to urban planting. €109.80.

Thomas Rainer (USA)
Landscape architect and leading voice in ecologically functional design for private and public gardens. €109.80.

Piet Oudolf (the Netherlands)
Internationally renowned Dutch garden designer and leading light in the New Perennial movement. €183.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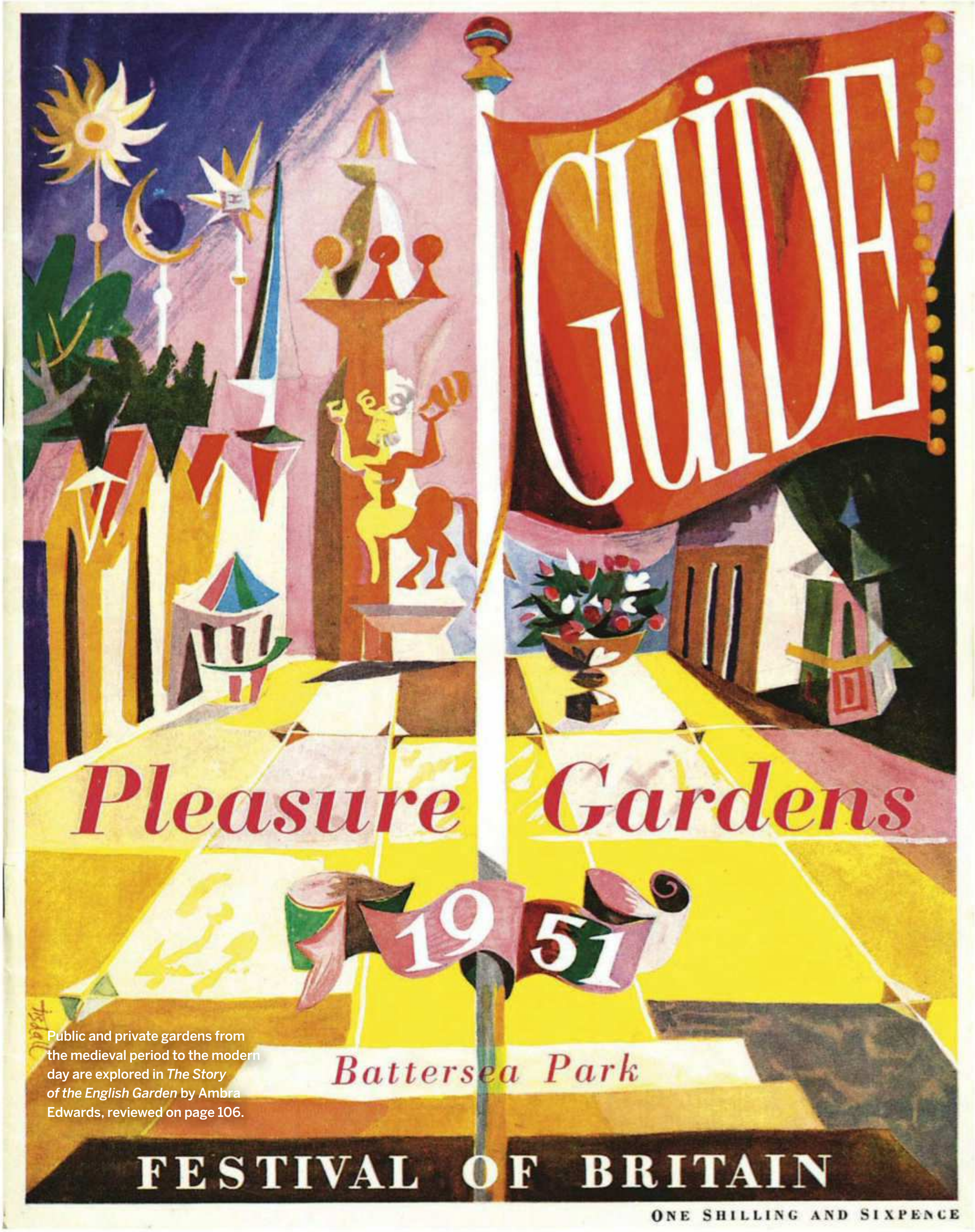
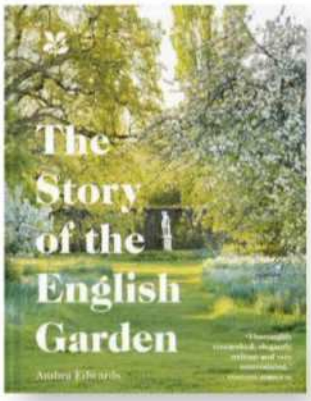

GUIDE
Pleasure Gardens
1951
Battersea Park
FESTIVAL OF BRITAIN
ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE

Public and private gardens from the medieval period to the modern day are explored in *The Story of the English Garden* by Ambra Edwards, reviewed on page 106.

WATER GARDENS AND FOUNTAINS IN BATTERSEA PARK; LORD PRICE COLLECTION/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

BOOK REVIEWS



THE STORY OF THE ENGLISH GARDEN
by Ambra Edwards

National Trust Books, £25
ISBN 978-1911358251

One of the most useful general garden histories of England to have appeared thus far, especially on the pre-20th-century period.

Reviewer Tim Richardson is a garden critic and regular columnist.

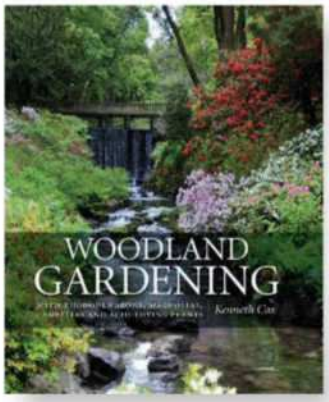
It seems odd that there hasn't been a modern illustrated history of the English garden before, and this compact and attractive book is intended to fill the gap. It is a highly readable synthesis of existing work on garden history in ten chapters, from the medieval period to a rather capacious 'postwar' era spanning the years 1945 to 2018.

The book is extremely strong in its first six chapters, which covers the period up to around 1900. Particularly welcome is the way medieval, Tudor and Stuart periods are treated as discrete moments in garden history, while the two chapters on Georgian gardens present the complexities of the time – artistic, philosophical, literary, political – with great aplomb. (Or perhaps one should say 're-present', because throughout the book the work of earlier garden historians, often hard-won in the archives, is sometimes referred to without acknowledgment.)

The great strength of the book lies in the writing style, which is easy and breezy, and the discrimination of the author in choosing key gardens, texts and paintings. This book is as well-written as Jenny Uglow's *A Little History of British Gardening* (2005) but eclipses it in terms of detail, interpretation and accuracy.

Until that is the chapters devoted to the 20th century. This is where the book unfortunately falls down, with a somewhat faltering chapter on Arts and Crafts, a digression into 'interwar gardens' and an all too brief survey of the 'postwar' scene from 1945 to the present day.

Overall this book is highly recommended as an enjoyable and accurate introduction to England's garden history from the Anglo-Saxon period to the high-Victorian era.



WOODLAND GARDENING: LANDSCAPING WITH RHODODENDRONS, MAGNOLIAS & CAMELLIAS
by Kenneth Cox

Glendoick Publishing, £40
ISBN 978-1527217874

An impressive, well-illustrated hardback that details the evolution of woodland gardening in the grand manner, and how to emulate it.

Reviewer Rory Dusoir is a Kew-trained gardener and writer.

Kenneth Cox was born into a dynasty of woodland gardeners and plant-hunters. His grandfather, Euan Cox, made an impulsive decision to join Reginald Farrer on his fateful expedition to Burma, and was the last European to see the great plantsman alive. Cox's family were therefore protagonists in the Golden Age of woodland gardening, when the flood of plant introductions from the Far East stimulated the creation of an extensive gardening style that could accommodate new woody treasures including rhododendrons, camellias and magnolias.

The most famous woodland gardens have been created over several generations on an epic scale, often by fabulously wealthy landowners. At Exbury, Lionel de Rothschild planted rhododendrons in clumps of 100 plants per variety. Although this level of grandeur may seem out of step with the way that most of us garden today, nevertheless it is important to have the story told. Ultimately, the movement that *Woodland Gardening* describes has had such a pervasive influence on horticulture that it will have left an imprint on even the most modest suburban garden.

Many of the gardens described in the book remain important resources today and the book is sure to stimulate plenty of fruitful garden visits.

The practical and design sections of the book, while generally directed towards large gardens, also bear relevance to anyone who gardens under trees on any scale. The book paints with a broad brush and covers such a vast topic that unfortunately there isn't enough room in the book for a plant directory. Nevertheless, a good deal of incidental detail can be found if you are prepared to mine the index. A beautiful and unmissable book.

WORDSWORTH'S
Gardens and Flowers
THE SPIRIT OF PARADISE

WORDSWORTH'S GARDENS AND FLOWERS: THE SPIRIT OF PARADISE

by Peter Dale and
Brandon C Yen

ACC Art Books, £30
ISBN 978-1851498956

A thoughtful look at William Wordsworth as both gardener and poet, through the gardens he created and his literary use of flowers.

Reviewer Juliet Giles is a freelance writer.

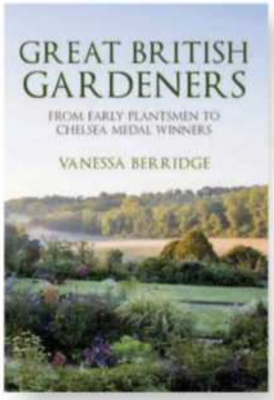
Think of William Wordsworth and flowers and there's very probably one in particular that comes fluttering to mind. But authors Peter Dale and Brandon C Yen are among 'those who've had enough of daffodils'. They are more interested in exploring how nature – and the space between 'wilderness and culture' filled by gardens – informed Wordsworth the poet.

Had he not been a poet, Wordsworth could easily have had a career in garden design. He was at one point commissioned by Sir George and Lady Beaumont to create a Winter Garden for their home Coleorton Hall in Leicestershire. That garden and others Wordsworth created for himself at Dove Cottage and later at Rydal Mount, are the subject of the first part of this book written by Dale.

Dale visited the gardens and dug through journals and letters to discover what plants were grown and how the gardens might have looked. He also paints a vivid picture of everyday life for William and his sister Dorothy – the plants they loved, the food they ate, their liberal guilt over using sugar from cane cut by slaves – and of Wordsworth the gardener, still getting his hands dirty in his seventies.

In the second part, Yen moves the focus from the gardens to the flowers, exploring the cultural, religious and political significance of a host of flowers – from roses to the humble pilewort – that offered muse to Wordsworth's poetry, with insights that make you want to revisit familiar poems and discover others for the first time.

Almost every plant is illustrated by a botanical print taken from a contemporaneous book – two in particular by Robert Thornton and William Baxter – making this a beautiful as well as a fascinating book.



GREAT BRITISH GARDENERS: FROM EARLY PLANTSMEN TO CHELSEA MEDAL WINNERS

by Vanessa Berridge

Amberley Publishing, £25
ISBN 978-1445672403

An elegantly written and stimulating selection of those who have shaped our understanding of what it means to garden in Britain.

Reviewer Jodie Jones is a garden writer.

This is a tremendous book. Vanessa Berridge has produced a work that wears its considerable scholarship lightly, and brings its subjects vividly to life through carefully selected anecdotes and the author's engaging style. As she acknowledges in her introduction, 'My list is necessarily personal and partial, and readers may well disagree with my choices' but, of course, that is part of the fun with an exercise of this sort.

Starting in the 16th century, with the early plantsmen John Gerard and the Tradescants, Elder and Younger, Berridge shepherds us through over 450 years of garden history, skilfully weaving connections from one era to the next as she brings her 26 subjects vividly to life. William Kent's face, 'with its high-domed forehead is,' she says, 'as sleekly smooth as David Cameron's.' Charles Dickens describes his friend Sir Joseph Paxton as a man 'whose very leisure would kill a man of fashion with its hard work.'

In each profile, the art, literature, politics and customs of that individual's world are considered. At times, names fly around like introductions at a crowded cocktail party, but Berridge is the consummate hostess, pointing out mutual acquaintances and shared interests. She leads us from Thomas Fairchild, 17th-century nurseryman and early hybridiser to William Robinson, father of the English flower garden. William Andrews Nesfield the Army engineer and artist turned high-Victorian garden designer contrasts with reluctant Army conscript and creator of Hidcote, Lawrence Johnston.

Berridge spent most of 2017 either in libraries or at her desk. Given that I finished this book feeling informed, entertained and itching to get out into my own garden, I'd say it was a year well spent.

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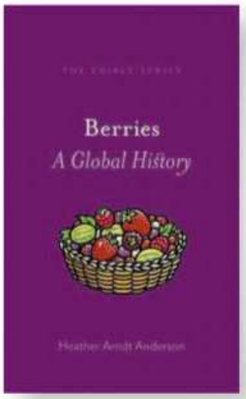


BERRIES: A GLOBAL HISTORY
by Heather Arndt Anderson

Reaktion Books, £10.99
ISBN 978-1780238951

A collection of anecdotes, folk tales and recipes about the influence of berries on social rituals and traditions from around the world.

Reviewer Alys Hurn is staff writer for Gardens Illustrated.

I have spent many warm, autumn afternoons, picking plump blackberries from field hedgerows. Arms scratched from stubborn brambles and fingers stained black from the fruit. The contents of the Tupperware bowl, almost as full as my belly, would be mixed with apples and topped with a crumble of oats, nuts and sugar.

Berries, documents such traditions, along with intriguing botany, berry-lore, and the berry's place in international medicinal and culinary history. It's the latest title from the Edible series by Reaktion Books. Author Heather Arndt Anderson, food writer, culinary historian and botanist covers the huge topic amazingly well, keeping the discussion engaging and entertaining throughout.

In the chapter on dishes and drinks, I discovered the origin of the Frisbee. According to Anderson, The Frisbee Pie Company in Connecticut sold its berry pies in tin plates. These plates became the original prototype for the popular game, when some forward-thinking person realised there was fun to be had flying the tins back and forth through the air.

There are darker tales too. In 17th-century Italy, the poisoner Giulia Tofana distributed *Atropa belladonna* berries to hundreds of women, particularly those in lower classes who, stuck in bad marriages, wanted rid of their abusive husbands. Her potent solution, Aqua Tofana, is said to have killed more than 600 men.

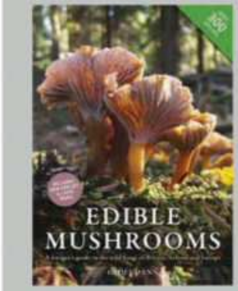
These stories, as well as the folk tales and mythology make for a fascinating read, especially the traditions from other countries and the influence berries have had on their culture. There's also a selection of historical and contemporary recipes at the back of the book. I have a new appreciation for these jewel-like fruits.

Other books

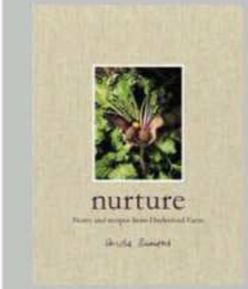
Five more new books to enjoy this month, with ideas on everything from foraging for mushrooms to herbal remedies.

WILD MOCKTAILS AND HEALTHY COCKTAILS
by Lottie Muir
Cico Books, £16.99
ISBN 978-1782494430
More wonderfully wild and flavoursome concoctions from Lottie Muir's pop-up bar, The Midnight Apothecary.

BOTANICAL INKS
by Babs Behan
Quadrille, £16.99
ISBN 978-1787131569
Learn how to make inks and dyes suitable for textiles, paper and canvas, using plants, garden produce and recycled food and plant waste.



EDIBLE MUSHROOMS
by Geoff Dann
Green Books, £24.99
ISBN 978-0857843975
A fully illustrated guide to more than 300 species of mushroom with helpful tips on how to stay safe while foraging for mushrooms.



NURTURE
by Carole Bamford
Square Peg, £35
ISBN 978-1910931721
Nutritional, seasonal recipes and ideas for a more mindful way of life from Daylesford Organic's founder Carole Bamford.

THE ART OF HERBS FOR HEALTH
by Rebecca Sullivan
Kyle Books, £7.96
ISBN 978-0857834775
Discover some herbal health fixes, such as herbal chest rubs and ginger-infused ice cubes for combating nausea.

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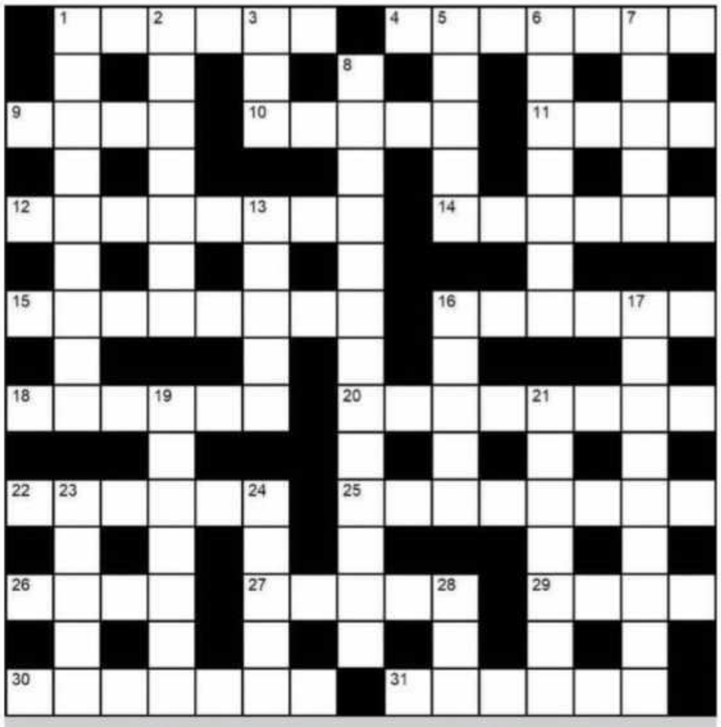

ACROSS

1 Name of clematis with bell-shaped mauve-pink flowers – a great structure in Kew! (6)
4 Austere name of a small red dessert apple (7)
9 Water-bound land – at centre of Wisley (4)
10 Rambling rose with clusters of pale-pink flowers, he let loose (5)
11 Bawdy colour of *Scilla sardensis* flowers? (4)
12 A *Chaenomeles* x *superba* with apple-like fruit – pa kindly moved (4,4)
14 Unwanted root offshoot – one easy to take advantage of? (6)
15 Shrub / tree with tulip or star-shaped flowers (8)
16 A certain stiffness found in potatoes (6)
18 A courgette relative's best part? (6)
20 Eg fronded plant of *Dicksonia* or *Cyathea* genus (4,4)
22 Large showy flowers – which control pupils? (6)
25 The wallflower genus – I put in summery arrangement (8)
26 Sooty fungal disease of plants – in virus mutation (4)
27 A panicle of eg pampas grass (5)
29 Bulge in lawn? That's a blow! (4)
30 Dark red, bitter cherry and a Lollo Rosso lettuce (7)
31 Irrigates top of wilting aster variety (6)

DOWN

1 The parsnip genus – cooked as a catnip (9)
2 Small variety of cucumber, a London icon! (7)
3 Colour obtained from some hardy elderberry (3)
5 Trees of the *Arecaceae* family, handy things (5)
6 Du Maurier's novel pink-flowering *Daphne odora* (7)
7 Sky-blue colour of *Gentiana makinoi* 'Sensation' (5)
8 Pyrethrum is obtained from this plant genus – my anthers much spoilt (13)
13 A terracotta-coloured sempervivum – having a soft light (5)
16 Run-down, like a pomegranate fruit? (5)
17 Ron's sumac affected plant commonly called Cornelian cherry (6,3)
19 Eg an echeveria's tightly packed cluster of leaves (7)
21 As crumbly soil is – possibly profitable without pot (7)
23 Ardent chap's name for a compact pelargonium with deep-red flowers (5)
24 Petals, surprisingly, have no time for this calyx part (5)
28 A red-flowering compact *Erica carnea* – in boulevard (3)

SOLUTIONS TO THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD WILL BE PRINTED NEXT MONTH

SOLUTIONS TO JUNE'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS: 7 Evita **8** Echinacea **10** Romance **11** Rosebud **12** Hosta **14/21** Dutch crocus **16** Own **17** Eschscholzia **22/26** Red spider **23** Sabal **25** Laser **27** Melissa **29** Pontiac **31** Evergreen **32** Trees.
DOWN: 1 Biomes **2** Dawn **3** Reseed **4** Ends **5** Scabiosa **6** Nandina **7** Earthy **9** Horatio **13** Aphis **15** Hazel **18** Sidalcea **19** Cabbage **20** Bramley **24** Lupins **28** Sage **30** Nuts.

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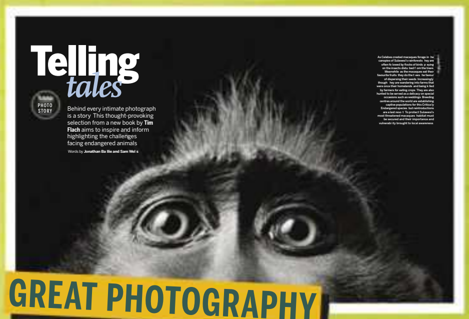

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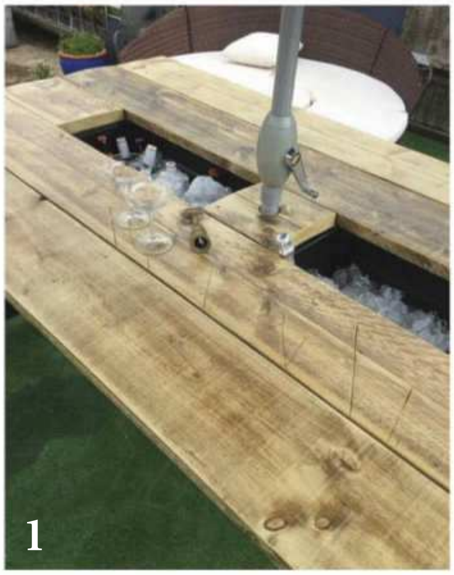

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Summer gardens to visit

Summer is a great time to visit this collection of stunning gardens

1 WOOLBEDING GARDENS

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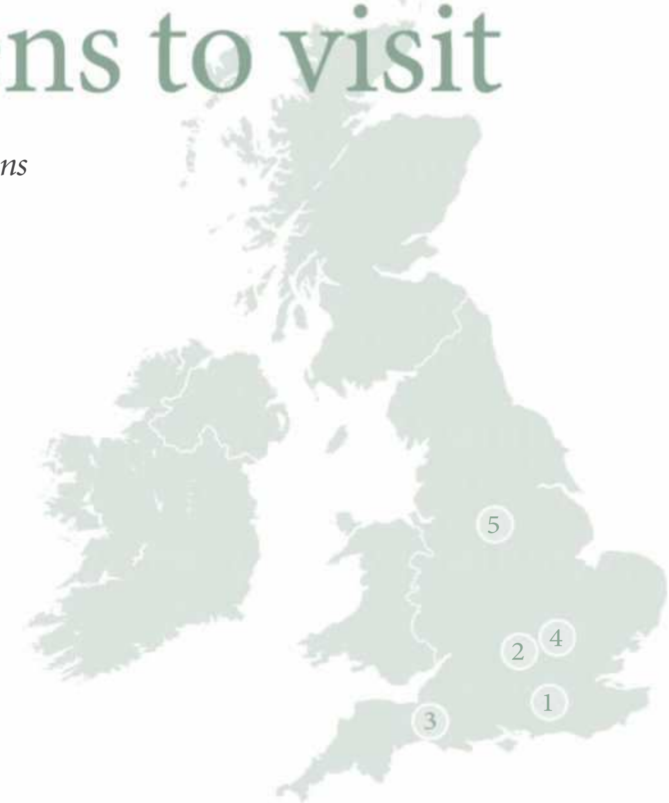
nationaltrust.org.uk/woolbeding-gardens | 0344 249 1895



2 WATERPERRY GARDENS

With the herbaceous border in full summer colour with delphiniums, heleniums and asters beginning to bloom, July is a wonderful time to visit the gardens. The beautiful setting of the outdoor amphitheatre provides a wonderful and varied programme of events – a must for theatre and music lovers.

Near Wheatley, Oxon OX33 1LA | waterperrygardens.co.uk | 01844 339226

3 THE BISHOP'S PALACE & GARDENS

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Wells, Somerset BA5 2PD | bishopspalace.org.uk | 01749 988111

4 WOBURN ABBEY AND GARDENS

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Woburn, Bedfordshire MK17 9WA | woburnabbey.co.uk | 01525 290333

5 HADDON HALL

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Bakewell, Derbyshire, DE45 1LA | haddonhall.co.uk | 01629 812855

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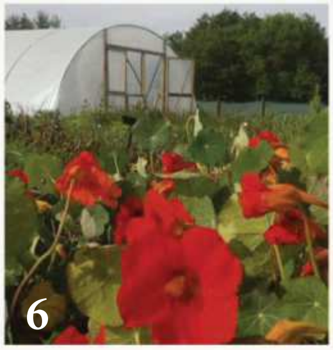
3



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26th August 11am-4pm
The Walled Nursery,
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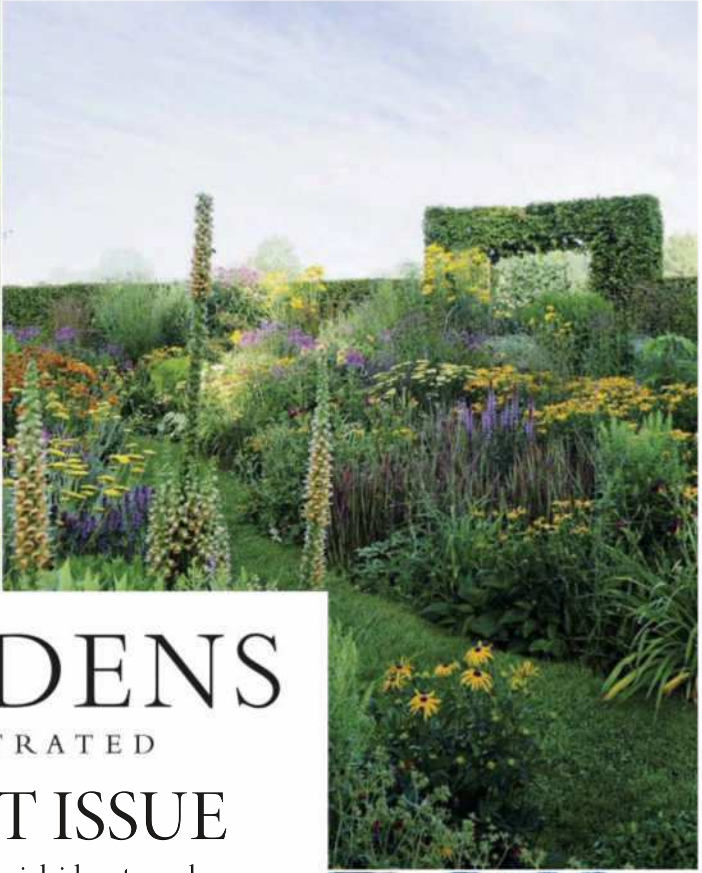

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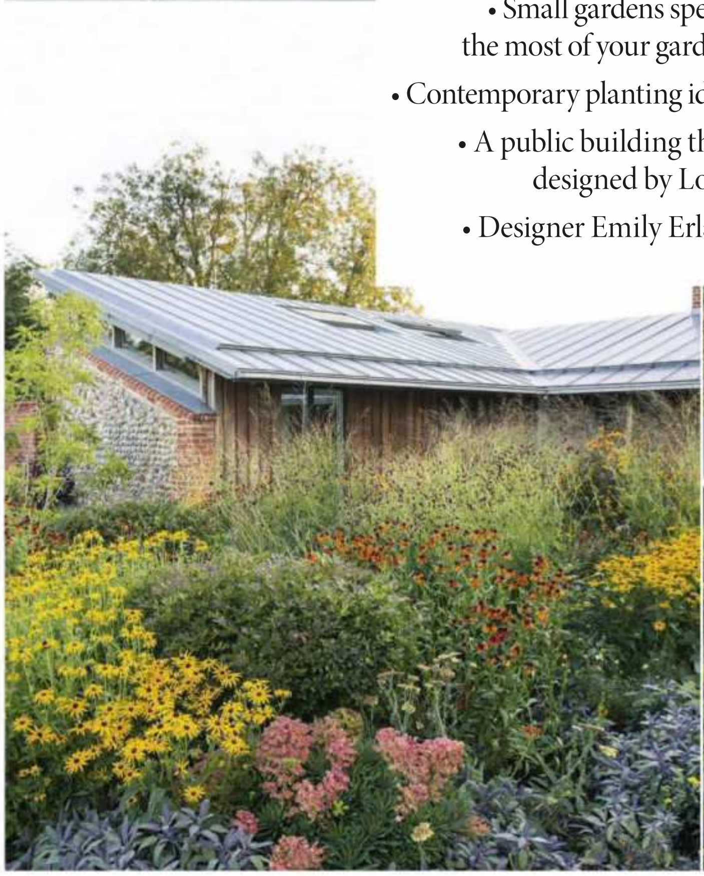
- Contemporary planting ideas for colour maximalists
- A public building that feels like a garden designed by Lodewijk Baljon
- Designer Emily Erlam's Norfolk garden



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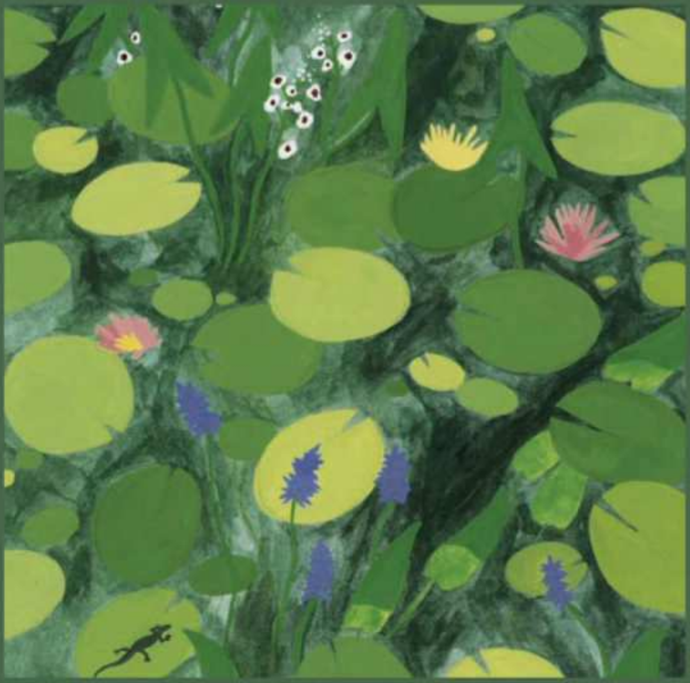
WRITER'S PLOT

SURFACE CALM

Although small, Frank's pond is a tranquil home for waterlilies and other aquatic plants, offering much reward for very little effort

WORDS **FRANK RONAN** ILLUSTRATION **RACHEL VICTORIA HILLIS**



Our pond was inspired by Indian stepwells. A bit of a rich claim, considering there are only two steps in it, but the water laps over the top of the lower one and you can't see below the bottom edge, allowing you to fancy, if you are fanciful, the granite blocks continuing into the depths. The design solved the problem of making the liner invisible – it runs below ground level around the outside of the top stone. It also allows wildlife to come and go at will. We resisted fish to encourage newts and the newts came soon and in quantity.

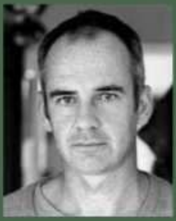
WATERLILIES ALONE LEAVE THE POND A BIT SUPINE, SO YOU NEED AT LEAST ONE THING THAT ERUPTS AND BREAKS THE HORIZONTAL LINE

It is not a large pond; ten square metres, and so discipline was required when it came to planting. We went to a place with a good selection of water lilies and chose the pink one and the yellow one that we liked best and looked best together. The note I made of the names is long lost (inevitably, it will reappear, too late, as soon as this is in print) so I can't tell you what they are, but I do recommend choosing your waterlily varieties from live examples and not from pictures in a catalogue. If you go to Wisley to choose, take binoculars: they may have done something about it by now, but the last time I was there the only way to read the labels otherwise was by standing on the grass that was dotted with large signs telling you not to stand on the grass.

Waterlilies alone leave the pond a bit supine, so you need at least one thing that erupts and breaks the horizontal line. Amphibious irises can do the trick, but there being irises nearby already I put in *Pontederia cordata*, irresistible on account of the fluffy blue spikes. *Sagittaria sagittifolia* ran a close, if more subtle, second, but I think I found the pickerelweed first and it liked me. If I had thought there was room I'd have both.

Having said that, I then found a papyrus for sale at the village fête and thought it might be fun for the summer and not last the winter. That was about eight years ago and it is still undaunted. This last winter should have seen it off for sure, but when I did my annual wade to clear out the detritus in the spring there it still was, green below the surface. The success of it can make the pond feel a little crowded at times, but not in an entirely bad way. Sometimes, in the summer, it is good to feel that things are ebullient and jostling and rubbing elbows.

There is some kind of pondweed that got in somehow and can get a bit out of hand (*Potamogeton crispus*, I think and I may even have put it in myself as an oxygenator), but half an hour with a rake once a year or so sorts it out. The removed hanks are left dripping around the edge for a day so that all the newts caught up in the enterprise can slip back into the water. I could get rid of the weed completely, but I have a feeling the newts like it and a suspicion that it might be the thing that is keeping the infinitely worse blanket weed at bay.



Frank Ronan is a novelist who lives and gardens in Worcestershire.

That and the annual wade in spring to clear out dead stuff, which between them are about an hour in total, are the only labour required by this part of the garden. There is nowhere else that gives so much for so little trouble. In the three years I was mostly away I don't think I ever got round to tackling it at all. Perhaps now, ten years or so in, it could do with an overhaul and the waterlilies should be divided, but that will be a pleasant way to spend a hot summer afternoon, and if it doesn't happen this year it will be no harm if it is left to next. □

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